

Halo: Republic Commando

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Summary: The Master Chief is forced into another universe and there he finds allies that makes winning the war possible, but that isn't the only thing. Will he and Delta Squad be able to repel the combined power of the Covenant and the newly formed Empire?

1. Just your average day, or is it?

****Revised Notes****: After I finished this story up, I started going back and revising the first half or so. If you see these revised notes, the chapter has beenâ€|well, revised. If you only see my old author's notes, I haven't reached that chapter yet.

I didn't change much in this chapter, mostly descriptions and errors. Nothing significant to the story line.

* * *

>Your average dayâ€|Or is it?

"Cover me!" RC-1138, Boss, yelled into the COM link as he headed out to confront the Trandoshan slavers.

"Got your back," replied RC-1207, Sev, as he set up his sniper attachment. Boss took out his DC-17m Blaster Rifle and shot at the three lizard-like Trandoshans that started charging towards him.

"Behind you!" shouted RC-1262, Scorch. Before Boss could turn around, Sev blasted a hole through the Trandoshan's head that was trying to knife him, leaving it dead where it stood.

"Nice shot," said RC-1140, Fixer, as he killed the last Trandoshan with a punch to the head. "Hard to top it."

"Bet I could," Scorch challenged, who was always getting into

pointless arguments with Sev.

"Fine, next time Boss needs cover, be my guest," replied Sev as he climbed down the ledge to regroup with the rest of Delta Squad.

Boss looked at his three squad mates as they walked over to stand beside him. They all had white armor with T-shaped visors but each had different colored markings. Fixer, his second in command and slicing expert, had green markings on his armor. He followed every order without question; one of the most loyal clones to the Republic. Scorch had yellow markings on his armor, and seemed to be the opposite of Fixer. He took care of the demolitions, blowing things up just for the joy of doing it. Sev, the most headstrong, had red markings and would usually be the first into battle. He also was usually the first to need bacta to heal him. Yet he was still a great sniper, which is why the rest of the squad usually relied on him to eliminate the far targets.

Boss had painted himself with orange markings and was the Squad Sergeant. He was the best at hand-to-hand combat, having broken his own training Sergeant's arm during a match. His team would follow him anywhere, even if it meant death. That's why he would rely on them with his life.

"Okay, let's move out Deltas," ordered Boss. Their mission was to eliminate any Trandoshans or Droids that were in the area. He quickly glanced over his shoulder to check his squad before leading them down further into the tunnel.

* * *

>Spartan-117 reloaded his Shotgun as he finished off the rest of the Covenant in the area.<p><p>

"Area is secured, Chief," said Cortana, referring to his rank, Master Chief Petty Officer. "We should probably head on to the rendezvous and meet up with Sergeant Johnson and the rest of his Marines."

"Copy that," replied the Chief, taking out his Battle Rifle before he headed farther into the forests of Jecovah.

Jecovah was a small planet just outside Earth's borders that had been taken by the Covenant. It gave the Chief chills to think how close the Covenant were to Earth. He and Sergeant Avery Johnson were making a vain attempt to eliminate the small Covenant band that had met up here.

As he was moving he heard Johnson over the COM link, "Where the hell are you? We've been waiting here for half an hour! Don't tell me you're taking in the scenery!"

"Sorry," replied the Chief as he knocked a branch out of his way. "Met some trouble but I'll be there momentarily so-" He was cut off by a crack of a twig behind him.

"Chief? Chief! Is something wrong?" The Chief shut off the COM link as he waited for the right moment before heâ€|_crack!_ He elbowed behind him and caught the camouflaged Elite right in the face, crushing bone. The Elite howled in pain until the Chief drove the

butt of his Battle Rifle into back of its head, killing it instantly.

"Chief! Multiple contacts, camouflaged!" Cortana's voice blared in his helmet as the Chief switched to his Shotgun and made sure it was fully loaded. Out of the corner of his eye he saw a rustle of leaves. Turning, he quickly fired his Shotgun but the Elite was quicker, moving out of the way. With dread he realized these elites were Ultras. Fast, strong; his equal.

The next thing he didn't expect were ten white-armored Elites to turn off their camouflage and to surround him. The Chief didn't know how he was going to get out of this one. If he went after one Elite, the rest would surely attack. Just then one Elite lowered its Plasma Rifle and said, "Now, Demon, lower your weapons. You are ours now." It clicked his mandibles in amusement, thinking it knew the Chief's fate.

But giving up and letting these Elites tear him apart was the last thing on his mind. He jumped and filled the nearest Elite's face with lead. It dropped but in less than a second three Elites were on the Chief, grabbing his arms and neck, preventing him from moving.

He then noticed what they were trying to do a moment before Cortana said, "Chief, these Elites aren't trying to kill you, they're trying to capture you."

He wasn't going to let that happen. Pulling his right arm from the Elite's grasp, he grabbed the Elite that was on his back and threw it to the ground. He then brought around his left arm and flung the Elite into its partner, sending them tumbling to the ground. Three more Elites joined into the fray and Chief knew it was hopeless to resist. Now four elites had his arms pinned behind his back and the other four had plasma rifles trained on him. The same Elite that had talked before, who the Chief figured was their leader, approached.

"You are weak, Demon, but we'll be able to find some use of you." It was then six yellow dots appeared on the Chief's motion detector, indicating friendlies. Before Johnson and his Marines reached the clearing, he spoke into the COM link quickly, "Johnson, there is nothing you can do here. Head back to the extract point and leave. That's an order."

Johnson stopped dead in his tracks when he heard, that's an order. The Chief had never really 'ordered' him to do anything ever since their friendship had grown on Halo. He knew he should follow the Chief's orders, but wanting to see what was going on, he told the Marines to stay put and crept forward himself.

He saw four white-armored Elites holding the Chief down, and five more with guns trained on him. One elite was talking to him but he couldn't hear what they were saying. Just then one of the Elites hit the Chief in the back of the head and he went sprawling in the grass, unconscious.

"Chief!" yelled Johnson. The Elites turned to look in his direction. He immediately turned around and ran back towards his unit. Cursing his stupidity he yelled, "Move!" to his Marines and they ran toward the extract point.

It was useless; they caught up with them in less than a minute and captured his team. The Marines struggled but froze when one of the Elites ordered, "Kill them, they are of no use." Johnson watched hopelessly as the elites executed each of his marines one by one. He tried as hard as he could to break free until one Elite had its Plasma Rifle trained on his head.

"Wait!" one Elite said before the other pulled the trigger. "We could be of use with this one."

2. Into the Unknown

****Revised Notes:**** I changed some of the descriptions of the Chief's mission as I know there was some confusion involved with that. Hopefully, that'll clear things up.

* * *

>Into the Unknown

As Delta Squad emerged from the tunnel, they scanned the area just to make sure there were no hostiles. When there weren't, Boss contacted their clone-advisor, the clone who gave them their missions.

"Sir, we've eliminated all hostiles, requesting extraction," he spoke into the COM.

"Very good, three-eight," replied the advisor a moment later. "Head to the mark on your HUD and we'll extract you there."

"Making our way there now, Delta-three eight out," Boss stated as he shut off the COM link. "Deltas, lets move out." He then started to cross a thin bridge that was spanned across a canyon, him taking point while Sev took the rear. It was so thin that the squad had to cross in a single file, one right after another. As they approached the middle, Boss heard a strange beeping that was in no way associated with his helmet nor any part of his armor.

"Uh, Boss? What's that?" asked Scorch, who stopped to listen harder. Boss listened too, and figured it out.

"Move!" he yelled at the others, but it was too late. The trip mines implanted in the bridge exploded, completely demolishing it. There was nothing they could do as they fell with the debris and rubble.

* * *

>Opening his eyes all Boss could see black. He then realized his HUD had shut down and he blinked several times in succession to reactivate it. When it was fully on, he checked for the rest of his squad but saw that none of them were linked to his system. Standing up, he checked himself for injuries, but the worst one he had was a bruise on his leg, giving him a slight limp. Boss shook it off and tried to contact his squad mates as they could be in a worse situation than he was.<p><p>

"Deltas? Deltas! Can anyone read me?" But it was no use, the only answer he got was static.

Just then he heard a feeble voice over the COM.

"Sir, I'm alright. I'm 20 feet to your left." Sev's number appeared on his visor and Boss ran in the direction and found him lying on the ground. Just by looking, he could tell the headstrong commando's leg was broken.

"Can you walk?" asked Boss, checking Sev's vitals on his HUD. They showed that he had no internal bleeding, only the broken leg. "We need to get out of here before hostiles show up."

"I'm going to need help, sir," Sev said as he tried to get up on one leg, but fell back down again. Boss knelt down and put Sev's arm around his shoulder. When they were situated, Boss stood up with Sev leaning on him and asked, "Have you been able to contact Scorch or Fixer?"

"No I haven't," Sev replied as he put some of his weight on Boss for support, "But I hope they're alright."

"So do I," Boss said gravely. "We should head towards the extraction point just in case they continued towards there." Sev nodded and tried to walk with Boss' help towards their destination.

* * *

>When the Master Chief awoke, he instantly knew he was in trouble. Four Hunters were standing there with their guns trained on him, and by the door several Elites were guarding the exit. Trying to move his hands, he saw that they were cuffed with some sort of new alloy he couldn't identify. He looked around and saw that he was in a room with blank purple walls and ceilings with an energy shield draped across the entrance; most likely it was a cell. Suddenly, he realized something was missing and noticed his energy shield covering his MJOLNIR armor was gone, along something else; Cortana.<p><p>

He swore under his breath but one of the Elites heard him.

"So, you are awake, Demon?" it growled at him, then turned to the Elite next to him. "Let the Hierarchs know he is awake." The Elite nodded and went out the door, only to be replaced with another Elite right after. Nobody moved as the time passed and ten minutes later the Elite that had left returned.

When it entered the cell, it announced, "It is time, Demon." One of the Hunters nudged him up with his gun and the Chief knew there would be no point in resisting. If he tried anything the Hunters and Elites would shoot him dead. As they exited the cell and walked down the corridors, the Chief realized that they weren't on a Covenant ship. He wondered if they were at a base on Jecovah, or possibly somewhere else; he didn't know how long he had been unconscious. He then wondered if Johnson and the other Marines had made it. He hoped they did because if they were caught, they would surely be executed.

They continued walking down the corridor and the Chief saw Grunts and Jackals cowering against the wall as the group passed, not wanting to get in the way. He cracked a small grin at their fear of him. _Serves them right,_ he thought. Just then, they approached a pair of large doors that the Chief figured was the Covenant leader's chamber. As

they entered he saw rows and rows of Elite council members sitting in the upper right bleachers of the room as well as Prophets on the opposite side. At the end of the room sat the three lead Prophets.

When they were in front of the Covenant Hierarchs, the Elites and Hunters knelt down but the Chief remained standing. An Elite guard walked towards him, but one of the Prophets held up his hand, causing the Elite to stop in its track. "Don't be so hasty, show our _guest_ some respect."

One of the Elites in the crowd stood up and yelled, "That's the last thing we should be showing him! He deserves to be shown the blade of an energy sword!" There were roars of agreement to this.

"If that were to happen, the Demon wouldn't be able to be put through our test," the Prophet replied. He then turned his attention to the Chief, "Do you know who we are, Demon? We are the Prophets of Truth, Mercy, and Regret." He pointed to each one in turn. "Do you know why you're here?"

The Chief looked him straight in the eye and stated calmly, "You'll probably kill me."

The Prophet of Truth smiled and said, "Yes, that was what we were originally planning to do. But, we have developed something that you could help us with."

"If it means anything to do with winning the war you won't make me," the Chief spat, only to get a blow to the stomach by an Elite. Without his shields it hurt him more and he doubled over.

"It may and it may not, Demon," Truth continued, "but you _will_ have to do it."

The Chief was pissed, but didn't say anything.

Mercy cut the silence short, "Bring in the prisoner." And with that, two Elites came walking in with Sergeant Johnson in between them. The Spartan looked over and his heart sank.

"Sorry, Chief, couldn't help it," he said with a weak grin, though his face was one of guilt.

"If you are to do this, his life will be spared." The Chief looked at the Prophets defiantly. If he refused, Johnson would be killed and most likely so would he. But, agreeing to the Prophet's demands was the last thing he wanted. Though, he knew in doing so there was a small chance he and Johnson could escape.

"What do I have to do?" The Chief said in a resigned voice.

Truth smiled, "I knew you'd see it our way." Turning to one of his Elite guards, he whispered something to him and the Elite growled an order in their own language. To the right of the Chief two sliding doors opened and revealed a path that was pitch black. Looking closer, he could tell it lead to nowhere because the light from the chamber did not illuminate the beginning of the path at all, as if there was something blocking it.

"This is a time portal we have created to go back in time toâ€¦|
alter certain things." The Chief immediately knew what he meant by
'alter'.

They would be able to change the outcome of the war if the portal
worked.

"But, the Elites we have tested it on have not survived the process.
They have either not come back or come back dead. But, with your
shield technology, you might be able to survive transportation
process."

Regret spoke up as he said, "It's not that you have any choice,
Demon. If you decline, this human will be executed," and he gestured
toward Johnson.

The Sergeant glared back at the Prophet but spoke to the Chief, "Yes,
you do have a choice! These bastards don't know what they're talking
about. If it works the whole human race will be in more danger than
it already is. That's worth sacrificing me!"

The Chief looked over at him, then at the portal. He remembered what
Dr. Halsey, the creator of the SPARTAN-II program, told him. It's
worth saving a person who could make a difference in the future. He
couldn't condemn Johnson when he had the choice before, and he
certainly wouldn't do it now.

"I'll do it, but I'll need my shields back." Truth nodded at an Honor
Elite standing beside his throne and it called for a Covenant
Engineer to fix the Chief's shields. After the floating worker was
done, there was the familiar _pop!_ as his shields became functional
again.

"Now you have one week to return. If you don't return on the seventh
day, Demon, this human will be executed."

The Master Chief glared at Truth and headed towards the portal, but
before he went in, paused.

"By the way, it's Master Chief, not _Demon_." And with that an Elite
rushed forward and pushed him into the portal where everything went
dark.

3. Friend or Foe?

****Friend or Foe?****

As the Master Chief came out of the portal, he tripped and fell to
the ground. Inside his helmet his shield alarms were blaring,
indicating that he was vulnerable. He then knew that Truth was right
about his shields; he alone had survived the portal. The Spartan then
looked around for anything he could use as a weapon, but found none.
He would be forced to rely on brute force to get him out of
this.

The Chief took in his surroundings, seeing if there were any forms of
life. There wasn't anything as far as he could see, only boulders and
rocks piled up against two sheer cliff walls. He looked up and saw
daylight and that the two cliff walls formed a canyon around him. The

Chief tried to find a way out and saw a small path sloping upwards towards the surface. Setting off, he began to climb the steep slope.

As he continued walking he kept one eye on his motion detector. He wouldn't be helpful if someone or something snuck up on him and killed him. He had no clue what was out here and he didn't want to take any chances. The Chief was then confused for a second when his shield bar drained a quarter and he felt something blunt on his back. He was knocked forward slightly and reacting instantly, he whipped around to face his attacker.

The alien was about as tall as his shoulders, wearing a small helmet and what appeared to be goggles around its eyes. Brandishing two knives the creature tried to attack him again but the Chief clenched his fist and punched the alien across the face, causing it to tumble backwards and almost off the edge. It wasn't done yet as it stood back up and with an angry screech charged at him, swinging its knives. The Chief braced himself for another attack when plasma fire hit the creature in the back, killing it.

"You must be new around here if you can't even notice a Trandoshan sneaking up on you." The Spartan looked up at the top of the path to see a figure in white armor with yellow markings, the rifle in his hands smoking from a recent discharge. The Chief finished climbing the rest of the path, and at the end the guy offered a hand. He hesitated, then decided that since this man had saved him he was on his side for now. The Chief reached up and grabbed his hand, the man helping him up the rest of the way.

"Who are you?" the Chief asked as he reached the top and was able to get a closer look at him. As far as he could tell the man was human, his posture similar to his own.

"Well, my number is RC-1262, but the rest of my squad mates call me Scorch, since I'm a demolitions expert." The Chief nodded, but he considered some of the things Scorch just said. He had a number, not a name, just like himself. Though, the Chief didn't tell people of his real name, John.

"Why don't you just have a name?" The Chief asked, but knew he should be the last person to ask that.

"I'll explain later," Scorch answered, a little cautiously. The Spartan knew Scorch didn't want to give too much away yet. Scorch then asked, "who are you? Never seen or heard of you in the Republic. You're not with the CIS, are you?"

The Chief didn't have a clue what the Republic or CIS was, but from the white-armored man's tone, the CIS wasn't the good side. "No, I'm the Master Chief."

"Well, alright Chief, where are you from?" asked Scorch, still a little wary.

"It's a long story," the Chief replied, then at an attempt to change subjects he asked, "You mentioned you were part of a squad. Where are they?"

Scorch crossed his arms suspiciously, and the Chief wondered if he

was going to answer when he said, "We were on a mission to eliminate the hostiles in the area." He looked at the large opening in the canyon and said, "While crossing the bridge, we walked right into a trap set by the Trandoshans. They had planted trip mines to explode as soon as we crossed. Once we triggered their sensors, the whole bridge was destroyed and we all fell and got separated on the way down. I was heading toward the extract point when I saw you fighting that Trandoshan."

Scorch looked back at him and said, "You don't have a weapon, do you?" When he shook his head, Scorch reached in his belt and pulled out what looked like a pistol and threw it to him. The Chief caught it, but didn't see any ammo readings.

"Doesn't this gun take ammo?"

"No it doesn't, though it can overheat. Be careful when that happens, the rate of fire will decrease. Sorry, but it's all I can give you since the rest of my firepower are attachments to this rifle," and he held up the rifle he shot down the Trandoshan with. "We better get moving if we want to reach the extract point by nightfall."

The Chief cocked his head, confused, "You don't care if I come with you?"

"I saw you fighting the Trandoshan. If you were a part of the CIS, you wouldn't have been fighting it. Besides," Scorch gestured to the weapon in the Chief's hand, "I'm going to want my pistol back."

* * *

>Boss walked into the clearing cautiously, still supporting Sev. They were still in hostile territory, and with Sev being wounded the commando had to be extra cautious. Once he made sure there weren't any Trandoshans, he made his way fully into the clearing.<p><p>

"Set me down right here, Boss. I need to rest," said Sev as they reached the middle. As he slowly sat down, Sev asked, "Made any contact with the others, sir?"

Boss shook his head, and replied, "No, I haven't. I'll try again." With that, he turned on his COM link and announced, "Deltas? Boss and Sev at the extract point. Meet us there." He paused, but wasn't surprised to hear only static in reply. He shut down the COM and knelt down beside Sev.

"Do you need a brace on that leg? We'll be here for a while."

"No, I'll live, sir," he replied. "No contact?"

"None," answered Boss as he stood up again to watch over his teammate incase the Trandoshans launched a surprise attack. "I don't know where they are, but-

"I'm right here, sir," cut in Fixer as he walked into the clearing with a slight limp. "Sorry about not replying to your calls, but my COM link short-circuited."

"That's all right, I'm just glad you're alive," Boss exclaimed as he walked over to meet him, clapping him on the shoulder. Fixer nodded

to his squad leader, then looked around the clearing.

"Where's Scorch?"

"We haven't been able to get a hold of him over the COM," Boss replied with a sigh. "Obviously, you haven't been able to make contact with him either?"

"No, sir, I was hoping you all made it here."

Boss bit his lip, thinking of the choice he might have to make. If Scorch wasn't here by the time the dropship arrived, they could only wait so long for him to show up. If he didn't, he'd persuade the clone pilot to do a scan of the area. Boss didn't want to think about what would happen if they couldn't find him. Rustling in the bushes interrupted his thoughts. It could be Scorch, but unless the commando had made some new friends he knew they were Trandoshans. Before they burst out of the bushes, Boss and Fixer took defensive positions around Sev to give him cover, but Sev had already taken out his DC and was ready.

Several Trandoshans burst out of the bushes, some with knives and others with ACP Array Guns, one of the few projectile weapons Boss knew of. He and Fixer opened fire, with Sev firing around their legs. Boss hit one Trandoshan in the knee, causing it to fall while another of its partner tripped over it. Sev fired, finishing off both of the unfortunate Trandoshans. Boss thought that he and his squad had it under control until he noticed more Trandoshans taking the place of the dead ones.

Boss reloaded quickly and continued firing, but it was useless. The Trandoshans were pushing forward in their ever lasting waves; it was like a full scale assault. That's when two of the scaly creatures were shot from behind. Scorch sprang from one of the bushes, ejecting his vibroblade and stabbing one of the other unlucky aliens in the back of its neck. Another man Boss had never seen before followed his squad mate into the clearing, firing with a DC-15. With the newly arrived reinforcements, they quickly pushed the Trandoshans into retreat.

"Should we go after them?" asked Fixer, sliding a fresh clip into his rifle.

"No, we don't have the numbers to truly finish them off," Boss ordered. "Extraction will be here shortly anyway." Scorch walked over to Sev and helped him up.

"Nice of you to drop by, Scorch," said Sev in a casual way.

"Well, got a little hung up," he replied, gesturing to the newcomer.

"Who are you?" asked Boss, walking forward to meet him. The squad leader wasn't intimidated even though this green-armored man was half a head taller than him.

"Just call him Chief, sir" Scorch answered before the man could say anything. Boss looked at his squad mate to shut him up then turned back to the Chief.

"Where are you from?" Boss asked.

"Well, I'd rather explain that in a more secure area," the Chief replied, glancing around at the clearing. Boss was about to refuse and leave the Chief behind, then reminded himself that he would have probably done the same. It wasn't smart to give out information in the open where everyone could hear you.

"Alright, you can tell us on the gunship when it arrives," Boss answered, and while he was talking he heard the unmistakable roar of an approaching ship. "Speaking of which, here it comes."

The ship came in over the tree line, descending into the clearing and blowing dust everywhere. Once it had landed, Boss, his squad, and the Chief piled in and the gunship took off.

* * *

>Revised Notes: I've decided to move the notes to after the chapter so I don't reveal any spoilers. In this chapter I made quite a few changes, like the conversation between the Chief and Scorch. Also, I thought my old version of how the Boss and Chief met was kinda cheesy, so I completely re-wrote that so it had a more realistic feel to it and Boss wasn't so OOC.

4. Revealed

**Revealed **

As the Chief climbed into the drop ship, he was in awe at how much firepower this thing had. On both sides there were turrets that could be manned by a single person and the ship itself had several barrels sticking out of the side. He sat down next to Scorch and handed him back his pistol, "Thanks, but I probably won't be needing it for a while."

Scorch took it as the one with the red markings asked, "Where are you from, anyway? Never seen you around here before," he turned to Scorch. "You're sure he's not CIS?"

"Well, he helped us out back there. Isn't that enough for now?"

The leader looked at the Chief for a moment, and then stated, "Since you're here for at least a little while, we might as well introduce ourselves."

"You already know me," said Scorch, then rested his hand on the commando with the red markings that was seated next to him. "This is Sev, sniper expert and the most headstrong."

Sev turned his head towards him, "Am I incapable of introducing myself?"

"Yes, you are," Scorch replied simply, and then pointed to the one with the green markings. "That's Fixer, second in command and a computer nerd. Need something sliced and he's your man."

"And I'm Boss," he said, "Sergeant of the squad."

"Well, there you have it," said Scorch.

"We're from the Republic, but where are you from?" asked Sev again, injecting something into his broken leg. The Chief watched in amazement as the leg healed itself and Sev put pressure on it. "That's better," he said and noticed the Chief looking at him, "Bacta, use it to heal ourselves." He then reached for something and threw a small, black disc into the middle of the floor. The Chief watched as an image formed of a soldier that donned similar armor to that of Delta. For a second he thought it was a message, until he saw the man turn to look straight at him. The transparent hologram reminded him of Cortana, and then of the mission he had been originally sent on. He would have to explain why he was here soon, otherwise he wouldn't make it back in time.

"Who's this, Deltas?"

"Someone we found on the streets begging for credits," stated Scorch. "We couldn't resist the round eyes so we took him in."

"Can it, Scorch," Boss said, then replied to the original question. "We were separated and Scorch found him fighting a Trandoshan. At the extraction point, he helped us fight off an ambush so we let him come aboard."

"Can we trust him?" the hologram asked, still staring at the Chief.

"Well, he's not a droid or a lizard," Scorch answered.

"You know there are more enemies out there," the man replied. The Chief felt this was getting out of control; if he explained himself, their questions would be answered.

"Look, I don't know who the Republic or the CIS are, but if you let me explain you'll get some answers." He couldn't see their faces because of their helmets, but he could tell they were surprised.

"Were you born yesterday, Chief?" Boss asked. "We're at _war_ right now, it's taking place all over the galaxy."

The hologram held up a hand for silence, "Explain."

The Chief sighed; where did he start? Might as well from the beginning. "Where I'm from, there is no way you could have heard of it. I was raised from the age of six in the military on a planet called Reach. Seventy-four other children were raised with me, but only about half that number survived the procedures we were put through. It was all apart of a project called SPARTAN-II. The survivors became Spartans, or super soldiers."

There was a brief silence until Sev said, "That's kind of like us, except we were born to fight."

The Chief just nodded in reply and continued. "During that time, a band of different aliens known as the Covenant declared war on us and began wiping out our planets one by one."

"A whole planet?" asked Fixer, amazed, "There is no such fire

power."

"They didn't completely destroy the planet, they glassed it. Evaporated all the water and burnt every bit of foliage. No one survives. We humans were fighting a losing war, and the Spartans were their only hope. So we were sent on a mission to capture a Covenant ship and find out where their home planet was. Right after we left, Reach was attacked and we were called back. That planet was one of our few remaining military bases, and the biggest. There really was no hope when we arrived, and the Covenant fought through and glassed Reach, and I was the only Spartan that survived."

He paused for a little bit, getting ready to begin again. It always pained him when he thought of his lost team.

After a few minutes, he continued, "I escaped aboard the ship The Pillar of Autumn and have made it through a lot of things since then, causing me to earn the nickname 'Demon' among the Covenant."

"They must really hate you to give you your own name," said Sev, almost in awe.

"Shut up, let him finish his story," Scorch interrupted before Sev could continue.

"Yes, that still doesn't explain how you got here," Boss noted. "But, your story is starting to make sense."

The Chief started again, "A long time after Reach fell, a fellow soldier named Avery Johnson and I went to a planet called Jecovah to eliminate a small band of Covenant that had gathered there. This planet was right outside of Earth's borders, which is our home planet. Sergeant Johnson and I were captured and I was forced to test out a time portal they had created or Johnson would have been killed and likely, so would I."

"Then the time portal brought you here," said Fixer, finishing it for him.

When the Chief nodded, the hologram said, "Your story fits, but how would you return and you would probably would be given a limit to how long you could stay here."

"Ten days," the Chief answered shortly, "And the portal is still there. I need to take it back before the time limit is up." When the Chief answered that question, he knew he had everyone in the room convinced. Just then, something rocked the gunship violently and everyone braced themselves so they didn't fall over. The hologram disappeared instantly.

"Deltas!" yelled the pilot, "We've got droid ships on our tail!"

* * *

><p>Revised Notes:** Just changed some of the conversations and tried making everyone in character more. Nothing was changed dealing with the story.

5. Kill or be Killed

****Kill or be Killed****

After the pilot had told him about the ships, Boss ran to the front, wanting the full detail of the situation.

"How many?"

"Three of them, sir," the pilot replied, steering the ship violently as he tried to evade the blaster fire from the ships. Boss had to grab onto a rung from the ceiling to avoid falling over. "They're right on my tail, out of firing range. If we don't do something soon, we'll be shot down!" Boss thought fast, trying to think of a way out of this. He left the cockpit, knowing he couldn't do anything there, and looked around. The laser turrets on each side of the dropship were empty. Sloppy, he thought, but it was then an idea struck him. He walked towards the edge of the ship and forced open the door.

"Boss? Are we evacuating?" asked Scorch as Boss looked outside and saw the three ships on their tail

"Not yet," he replied over his shoulder. "If I fall, go on without me."

"What-" Fixer started, but Boss ignored him and took a flying leap, landing on one of the laser turret's cockpit. At first it was all smooth, and for one frightening moment he thought he was going to fall after all, but then his hand found one of the poles that held the turret in place and he grabbed on. With his other hand, he reached forward and slipped his fingers into the slot, wrenching the door open.

"Boss, are you crazy?!" Scorch asked over their COM link, surprise and awe both in his voice.

"No, I'm just trying to save our kriffing hides," he replied, swinging into the seat and closing the hatch. Activating the panel inside, he turned the laser toward the three Geonosian fighters. They had seemed to have missed him, not firing until the bright green beams nailed the front end of the first fighter, sending it flying into the ground below. One of the fighters flew to the other side and out of range, but the third one flew in closer, taking a few shots at Boss. One blaster beam passed way too close to his liking, but he kept his head down and fired another shot. The laser grazed the side of the fighter, causing it to pull out and away from the fight. Admitting defeat against the final fighter, Boss pushed open the hatch and cautiously stepped out. Setting his feet in place he jumped back into the dropship, and Sev and Scorch grabbed his arms to help him in.

"Nice shot, sir," said Sev, quickly grabbing a rung above his head when the ship shook again, "but, I think you missed one."

"Feel free to finish the job," Boss said, walking back towards the cockpit.

Sev shrugged, "Okay." He then started walking towards the edge of the ship until Scorch grabbed his shoulder.

"Sev, _no_," Scorch said, pulling him back. "He was _kidding_."

Boss continued on to the cockpit, standing at the pilots shoulder.

"Good shooting, but that last one's going to end up getting us," the pilot stated, tapping a few controls. "You've only just bought us time."

Boss nodded in understanding. "Fly low to the ground, as low as you can get. We're evacuating."

"Yes, sir," the pilot replied, typing in the necessary controls. Boss felt the ship decelerate and drift slightly down under his feet. He then headed back to where his squad mates and the Chief were standing.

"We're evacuating now, aren't we?" asked the Chief, most likely noticing the ship's change of flight.

"Yes, get ready. As soon as the pilot gets back here, we're jumping." It took a few moments and as each one passed Boss became more agitated. Finally after what seemed like forever the pilot stumbled into the back, stationing himself on a rung.

"I've set a course for the cliff wall," the pilot reported. "We have to jump _now_."

"Let's go!" Boss immediately yelled, motioning for them to move out. Sev was the first to jump, not even hesitating at the edge as he stepped over. Scorch and the pilot quickly followed, but while approaching the opening Fixer glanced over his shoulder.

"Go!" Boss ordered, "I'll be right behind you!" Fixer nodded and immediately jumped, his body dropping out of sight. It was then only Boss and the Chief. Without exchanging a glance they both stepped off, immediately dropping downwards fast thanks to the weight of their armor. Fortunately, it was not a long fall as they hit the ground thirty feet below and both rolled to take the impact of the jump. As they stood up Boss turned to look at the Chief, who was looking back at him. In the Chief's faceplate Boss could see his own T-shaped visor reflected in the light.

Maybe we're not so different after all, Boss thought, turning to look towards where the dropship was heading. The Geonosian fighter, unaware that its target had jumped ship, was hard on the Republic ship, heading right towards the cliff. Once it saw what was going on it was too late to pull up and it crashed right into the rock, instantly exploding into a giant fireball.

"Woo, what an explosion!" Scorch cheered, pumping a fist up in the air and Boss couldn't help but grin.

"Good job Deltas," Boss said, and nodded to where the pilot and Chief were standing, "and you two as well."

"Thank you, sir," the pilot replied while the Chief just nodded in acknowledgement.

"Okay, I'm calling the advisor for an extra extraction, if possible," Boss announced, and stepped away from the group slightly. Activating his COM, he said, "Advisor, this is three-eight, come in." A pause, no answer. "Sir, this is three-eight, answer if you can read me." Once again, just silence met his words, making him confused. He changed his frequency so that any Republic forces could hear him, "This is RC-1138, my squad and I were shot down during extraction. Can anyone read me?" When there wasn't an answer even to that he became worried. Were they being jammed and he didn't realize it? Shaking off the uneasy feeling, he walked back over to his squad.

"So, are they sending another dropship?" Fixer asked as he approached.

"I couldn't reach anyone on any frequency," Boss replied. "Not a soul answered me."

"Could you be getting jammed?" the Chief asked.

"It's a possibility," Boss said, then thought for a moment. It was no use staying out in the open like this. "Let's find some shelter for the night, rest up, and we'll try again in the morning."

* * *

><p>The six soldiers now sat in a cave, which they had found at the very base of the cliff the Geonosian fighter had exploded on. They hadn't cooked or ate anything since that would attract attention to unwanted visitors. All of them were trained to be able to last a while without food, and with their ration cubes they would be fine. After examining the crash, they had found some extra ammo and a blaster rifle for the Master Chief. He currently sat next to Scorch, examining the weapon he knew now was the DC-17 blaster rifle. He had never seen a weapon like it in his universe, with the ability to change shape in an instant. First a rifle, then an anti-armor weapon, and finally a sniper rifle, this thing had it all. Scorch was just teaching him how to use it, and everything it was capable of.<p>

"See this thing sticking out of the side?" Scorch asked, pointing to the side of the rifle. "That shows how much ammo you have left, and the light bar right there shows how much you've got left in your clip."

The Chief lifted the rifle more towards his face, examining every inch of it and making mental note of where the major features were. "How powerful is this?"

"Pretty powerful," Fixer replied, listening in on their conversation. "The rifle itself will handle mostly anything from Geonosians to Battle Droids. If you've got something bigger, like a Droideka or Spider Droid, you can use your anti-armor." The Chief just kept looking at the rifle, having no idea what enemies Fixer was talking about. The only enemy he knew of was a Trandoshan.

"Then again, you probably have no idea what Fixer's talking about," Boss said, echoing the Chief's thoughts.

"Oh rightâ€¦kind of forgot about the whole 'I'm not from around here'

thing," Fixer replied, shrugging.

"Well, Battle Droids and Droidekas are robot-type things," Scorch started explaining, "Geonosians are flying bugs, and Spider Droids are bigger machines that walk on four legs."

"You plan on educating him about every single enemy out there?" Sev asked, looking at Scorch.

"I think I'm doing a well enough job," Scorch said, leaning back against the cave wall and clasped his hands behind his head. Sev just shook his head in response.

"What about you, Chief?" asked Fixer, and when the Chief cocked his head in confusion he continued, "I mean, what about your enemies? You mentioned the Covenant, what are they like?"

The Chief didn't explain things often, but they had asked. "The Covenant aren't just one race, they're actually an alliance of several different alien races. The Prophets are the leaders, and we've only seen three of them so far. Then there are the Elites, the Covenant's main warriors. They give us the most problems as they're brutal fighters."

"Do they have any kind of ranking system?" Boss asked, "Any kind of military structure?"

The Chief nodded, "It first goes by race, and then individually. Some races can never have a high rank, like the Hunters. They're large, if they stood up to their full height they'd be at least twelve feet, but they're constantly bent over. They're just there to fight, and aren't exactly the most intelligent beings out there." Not wanting to get into too much more detail he briefly described the Brutes, Drones, Jackals, and Grunts, stating what they looked like and their main position.

"I can see why the Covenant are so brutal," Fixer stated after he finished. "It's one race, the humans, versus every other alien race out there."

The Chief didn't reply and Scorch said, "I guess we're lucky to have alien races that-" It was then Boss help up a closed fist and Scorch stopped instantly, hand on his rifle. The Chief had already grabbed his blaster rifle; he had heard what Boss had. All six soldiers, including the Clone pilot, slowly rose to their feet, hands on their weapons. It was then something burst out of the bushes and into the cave with frightening speed, tackling the pilot. Before anybody could make any kind of move the pilot's head was decapitated and his killer stood to his full height.

"General Grievous?" Boss asked in surprise and confusion, his rifle trained on the monstrosity that had just entered their camp. It was made completely of metal, no distinguishing signs of flesh or blood except for the eyes, which were cat-like and yellow. Its mask vaguely reminded the Chief of a skull and what looked like two detached horns protruded from the sides. It was holding some kind of sword in each of its two hands, their light giving off an eerie glow of blue and green on the cave walls.

"Ah, I thought I would find you here," the thing called Grievous

stated. "You don't hide well."

"What are you doing here?" asked Scorch, both anger and fear in his voice. The five of them were trapped, Grievous covering the only entrance to the cave.

"You have disobeyed a direct order," Grievous replied, turning to face Scorch. "The penalty is death."

"What?!" Boss asked, taken aback. The Chief had no idea what was going on himself. "What order? And why are you, a Separatist, here to punish us?"

Grievous narrowed his eyes, then let out what seemed to be a laugh. "You don't know? The war is over, the Empire lives, and I work privately for the Emperor. Order 66 was spread among the Republic forces." The Chief noticed that when he had said 'Republic', it seemed like he spat it out. This thing was obviously against whatever the Republic stood for.

"I don't believe him," Fixer stated, and then turned to Boss. "I think it's a trick." However, the Chief noticed that Boss didn't answer right away and was thinking. The Spartan himself remained quiet, not having any idea as to what was going on.

"Then how would he know about Order 66?" Boss asked, and the Chief realized that it had come in over their COM link. His must have automatically synched with the commandos.

"Tortured somebody, stole the information, who knows," Fixer retorted. "It's a way to make him think that he's on our side!"

"I don't know," Scorch said, unsure. "What if Order 66 is going on right now? Our communications have been down for who knows how long with the outside world."

Nobody said anything to that. Delta remained eerily silent until the Chief broke the silence.

"Sorry for being out of the loop, but what exactly is Order 66?"

"It's one of the hundred orders taught to our army," Fixer replied. "66 was the one that stated that our Jedi Commanders and Generals have betrayed the Republic and were to be eliminated."

"That's enough," Grievous snarled, most likely knowing that they had been conversing inside their helmets. "Join the newly formed Empire, or pay the consequences."

"Empire?" Boss muttered, still confused as to what was going on. Grievous must have heard him.

"Yes. The Republic has fallen, and the Empire has been established with Emperor Palpatine at it's head."

"This sounds ridiculous," Scorch said, shaking his head. Grievous turned his yellow eyes upon him and Scorch slightly raised his weapon. The cyborg must have noticed as he laughed.

"You think you could face me?" he asked, "when I've defeated countless of Jedi?"

"I could sure as hell try," Scorch snapped back, obviously getting pissed at this thing. Boss ordered him to stand down, then turned to face Grievous. If the General could smile, the Chief knew he would be right now.

"So what will it be, Sergeant?" he asked, "will you join the Empire, or face the penalty?"

Boss remained silent for a few moments. The Master Chief knew exactly how he felt, having to make a decision that both ways could get his squad killed. It was a heavy burden to bear. A few more seconds passed by until Boss finally gave his answer.

"We don't believe you." The Chief's adrenaline shot up; he knew what was coming.

Grievous then stood up to his full height and the Spartan realized they may have just made a fatal mistake.

"Then so be it," Grievous spoke, and with that, he lunged with unbelievable speed at Scorch, aiming to kill.

* * *

><p>Revised Note's: Changed quite a bit in this chapter, like the scene of evacuating the drop ship and Grievous's exchange with Delta. I had written this chapter previously before Episode III had been released in theaters, so I didn't know about Order 66 or much to do with it. Fixed that up, adding in what Order 66 was, and everything else I could.

6. A Decision is Made

****Author's note:**** More replies to more reviews.

Jedi Keliam Kenobi: Ok, jus wanted to make sure that I wasn't going to ruin the level for u, but try facing greivous' guards on hard. It re-defines the meaning of hard.

Warp Ligia Obscura: Yea, cliffhanger and much more.

lightman: Sorry, but not sure what u mean by the question. It may be just me or not.

H-Dog: My bad, caps lock.

ChaosWolf021: Thanks for being specific, I like that.

Commander: He probably could, if he had a decent weapon to fight with a lightsaber

Xenomoose: Sorry, can't give anything away yet.

red ninja: thanks, and ill continue

Skulls: Nice choice of words, seriously, and I read the 'sith

business', that was funny! But u probably already got my review though.

Yoshidude5371: Thanks _stevie,_ that's right people, I'm one of his retarded cousins if you've read his profile thingy.

TheAmazingTecnocolorRingWraith: Thanks, but just read this chapter, that'll answer your question.

* * *

>A Decision is Made

As Grievous lunged, the Chief tensed his muscles. He had been waiting for him to act. Considering the lightsabers just to be like a plasma sword, taking a few hits to kill, he jumped at the same time as Grievous and hit him around the waist. They flew and hit the cave wall. Grievous was stunned for a second, but quickly got over it and kicked the Chief off with his legs.

The Chief was amazed at the strength of him as he flew and hit the other wall. Grievous was on him in a second, pinning him against the wall. The others were shooting at him with their rifles, but he just kept deflecting them like it were nothing. The general cut one of his lightsabers into John's arm, right through his shield, and to the skin. As it cut into him, the Chief yelled in pain until he heard another lightsaber activated and Grievous was forced off of him.

"Master Windu!" he heard three-eight yell in surprise as he saw a black man with a purple lightsaber fighting fiercely with General Grievous. The man yelled, "Go! I'll hold him off!" Three-eight motioned for them to go, and the five of them ran out of the cave entrance. They stopped when they reached the edge of the forest nearby.

"Let me patch it up," said three-eight to the Chief who was holding his arm.

"Not yet," he said, "It's too near danger." Three-eight was about to respond, but he agreed.

"I can't believe Master Windu is still alive, let alone saved us," said Fixer in awe.

"But how did Grievous find us so fast? It's only been about four hours," asked Sev, who was reloading his gun after that brief firefight.

"I don't know," replied three-eight, "But we shouldn't assume this is over, we should remain here just incase Master Windu needs help."

"We wouldn't be able to do much though," said the Chief, "He deflected your bullets."

"Yea, most Jedi and Sith can do that," said three-eight, who glanced at the cave entrance anxiously.

"Jedi? What are they?" asked the Chief, who once again was lost in the conversation.

"The most respected people in the Republic, or what is left of it," replied Scorch bitterly, "They use a huge power which is the force, and can control a lot of things. They also are really skilled with a lightsaber."

"Was Grievous a Jedi?" said the Chief.

"Not a chance," said Fixer, "Jedi are with the republic, and are the good guys."

"Master Windu in there was a Jedi, one of the best, but Grievous is just a droid," said Scorch, "He's equals the Sith though, except he can't use the force." The Chief was about to reply but was interrupted when he heard a loud noise and turned toward the cave. The man was holding out his hand and the rocks over the cave entrance were collapsing, sealing it off. He then ran towards them and said, "Lets go, that won't hold him for long," and they ran deeper into the forest.

When they were far enough away, they settled down to rest. The man called Master Windu sat and looked at the Chief, he asked, "Who are you?"

"He's the Chief, sir," answered Scorch for him, "He came from the future, long story." He nodded and said, "My names Mace Windu, and I can tell you really aren't from around here."

"Sorry to interrupt, sir," said three-eight, "But how did you know where to find us?"

"Thought you might ask that," he replied, "I received the clone advisor's stress call and came to help. But when I got there, he was already dead. You could tell he was killed by a lightsaber, stabbed. Then I looked on the computer and saw your coordinates from the last transmission he had sent you, and knew whoever killed him was after you. I thought it might have been Anakin, but I wasn't expecting Grievous."

"What happened with Anakin, sir?" asked Fixer. He sighed and said, "Anakin has been overcome by the dark side of the force. He is on his way to becoming a Sith lord." Everyone was shocked to hear this, except for the Chief, who didn't even know who Anakin was.

"I can't believe it," said Scorch, "Is that why the clones aren't with us anymore?" Mace Windu nodded, "They take orders from the emperor now."

"Are there any Jedi left?" asked Sev, in a hopeful kind of way.

"Yes, I believe Master Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi are left, but I don't know where they are. I think Obi-Wan went to help Padme until she gave birth."

Sev nodded grimly, thinking of all the Jedi that had been murdered. The Chief was slowly taking all this in, thinking of what was going on. Obviously Anakin used to be a good guy around here, a Jedi, but

became bad, which was the Sith.

"What ifâ€|" but the Chief was cut short when he heard a weird whirring noise behind him and he turned around to see what it was. He saw a black ball shaped thing floating and he saw what looked like a camera in the center.

"Recon droid! Move!" yelled Mace Windu and they all got up and ran, with the recon droid going the other way.

"Where should we go, sir?" asked three-eight as they ran.

"You said the Chief came from the future, didn't you?" he asked.

"Yes," three-eight answered.

"Then, can he still go back?"

"Yes," The Chief answered this time, "The portal I came through is still there."

"Since there really isn't anything you can do here, Deltas, why can't you go with him?"

Everyone remained silent, including the Chief. Why hadn't he thought of that before? But would they want too?

"Chief? What do you think?" asked Scorch as they stopped for a second to figure out what they were doing. The Chief nodded, "Yes that would work. Since your shields are as strong mine, maybe even stronger, you would survive. And with you guys, I would be able to actually get out of there, and rescue Johnson and Cortana."

"Cortana?" asked Fixer.

"She was an AI that was with me, but the Covenant took her."

"Well, Delta Squad, what do you think? I won't force any of you to go, but in my opinion, I think we should," said three-eight as he looked at the rest of his squad.

"Count me in," Scorch said almost automatically.

"Me too, sir," said Fixer.

"Make that three," said Sev.

"Well, then it's decided," said Mace, "But I can't go with you, I have to do all I can here." Three-eight nodded, "Then let's get back to the canyon." Then the five soldiers took out their gun, said their goodbyes, and headed back to the canyon.

When they got there, it looked emptier than ever, without the trandoshans being there. They had all retreated when Delta Squad had killed most of their party their. They headed to the bottom of the canyon.

"Chief, where id it?" asked three-eight as they reached the bottom. The Chief pointed about ten feet away and they could see the black

tunnel that lead to nowhere. They went up to it and stopped.

"Is this it?" asked Scorch.

"Yes, but I've got to warn you," said the Chief, "There are the leaders who control the Covenant, they're called the Prophets. There is only three, but don't go after them. They would probably kill you, and they have shields that protect them. It's just pointless."

"Got that, Deltas?" asked three-eight, and when they all nodded, he said, "Ready when you are Chief." The Chief nodded and jumped through, the others following quickly.

When they were back, there were barely any Covenant there, since they had not been expecting him for another nine days. When the prophets saw them though, Truth yelled, "It's the Demon! Kill him and his followers!"

"Followers?" asked Scorch, "Who's he talking to? And he's about the ugliest thing I've ever seen," he added as an afterthought. And with that, he took his gun out and shot the elite that was coming at him. The elite was surprised at the kind of fire power he had, and he didn't even have time to return fire. Everyone else took out their guns, the Chief holding the gun with his left because of the cut in his right arm, and started shooting. Soon, the chamber was empty and two dozen elites lay dead on the ground. The Chief looked for the door and found it, at the other end of the room.

"There's the door," he said to three-eight, "We should look for the detention block and try to find Johnson and see if there are other marines."

"Okay, let's go Deltas," three-eight replied and they followed the Chief through the door. On the other side, they saw a barricade of jackals holding up their shields. As soon as the door opened, they started to fire their charged plasma pistols. The five of them dove to the sides of the door, Fixer and Scorch to one side and three-eight, the Chief, and Sev to the other.

"Blast! Those thing's guns are powerful," said Scorch, who was waiting for his shield to charge before shooting his gun again.

"Don't let them shoot their overheated plasma at you; it'll take away most of your shields."

"Now you tell me!" Scorch replied, "But I've got a surprise for them." He took out a thermal detonator and activated it. He threw it over the jackals' shields and it landed right behind them. Before they could react, it exploded, sending all six jackals through the opening in the door.

"Nice hit, six-two," said three-eight as they went through the door. They then kept on going, killing anyone who got in their way. They went through so many hallways that the Chief lost count. Then as they reached a fork in the halls, the doors were both locked.

"I think we'll have to backtrack," said Fixer.

"Oh, I don't think so," said a voice that was all too

familiar.

"Cortana!" She then appeared on a pedestal beside the door, smiling at him.

"Having fun with your new friends, Chief?" she asked in a casual way.

"I'd thought the Covenant would be getting information out of you," said the Chief in relief and amazement that they had not got a hold of her.

"They tried all right," she replied, "But when they inserted me into their system to get the info, which was a bad idea, I slipped through their fingers and I have been running from them ever since," she eyed the others and said, "I can tell you've been busy as well."

"Guys, this is Cortana, and this is Delta Squad," the Chief said, gesturing to each in turn.

"Wait," said Cortana, "Chief, elites coming down this hallway. Might suggest giving them a warm welcome." The Chief nodded and took out a plasma grenade he had taken from an elite and got ready to throw it. The commandos' got the idea and took out their own thermal detonators and got ready.

"Now!" yelled Cortana and the five of them primed and threw their grenades. No less than a dozen elites jumped right on top of the grenades, and an unlucky elite got the plasma one stuck to his face. Three seconds later all the grenades blew up and all twelve of the elites went with them.

"Whoa! I've got to get me one of those!" said Scorch as he saw the plasma stick to the elite.

"Wait Chief, hold fire! Unidentified figure coming this way!"

The Chief and the others froze when General Grievous stepped into the hallway, all four lightsabers drawn.

* * *

>Author's note: I know, you guys are probably are getting mad at me because of the amount of cliffhangers I have, but it's to keep you hooked on the story. The chapters are getting longer too, so enjoy!

7. Very Persistent

****Author's note:**** More replies! Enjoy.

Jedi Keliam Kenobi: I'm sorry you died. I'll update.

xXxoddman: Sorry you feel like that, but since you're the only person who has really said anything about the cliffhangers, they are probably not going to change anytime soon. But glad u still like my story.

Cpt Of the GTVA: thanks

xXHellsingXx: Glad you don't hate me so much, but not giving anything away. You'll just have to read.

TheAmazingTecnocolorRingWraith: Not yet, sorry for making u late to wherever u were going.

H-Dog: Ok, that's good. Just making sure I wasn't making everyone mad.

Lieutenant Rusty: Thanks, and I'll look out for those words, since Microsoft word didn't catch it.

Warp Ligia Obscura: Yea, he is.

ChaosWolf021: Thanks, but people do hate the cliffhangers. I'll put more details in it too.

lightman: He doesn't go back in time to change it, just to test it out. Sorry I didn't understand your question.

Blitzfire: I said this in an author's note but I'm going by my own theory on how everything happens. Thanks for he heads up though.

red ninja: Thanks, I'm glad you think mine is the best out of the ones your reading. I don't care if you go overboard, just as long as you keep reviewing!

The Great Wazoo: Wow, thanks for all the nice comments. Thank you. But for Grievous I was going to explain that later on in the story but since u asked ill answer, he's a droid, not a living thing, so it doesn't affect him.

TheHolyDarkness: Thanks.

halomasterchief: Thank you, but there are other good halo fanfics out there, and this does take place after First Strike and before Halo 2.

Republic Chief: I hate you and thank you. (Inside joke)

That's it, except thanks to Warp Ligia Obscura for giving me an idea for the chapter title. Now on to the story!

* * *

>Very Persistent

The Chief couldn't believe his eyes. How could he of got here? That recon droid or whatever it was must have given them away.

"It takes a lot more than a Jedi to hold me off," said Grievous, who deactivated one of his lightsabers and attached it to his belt, then grabbed another one and activated it. The Chief heard three-eight gasp as the lightsaber was purple. Cortana was lost in what was happening.

"Chief, who is this guy?" she asked over their sealed COM link.

"Let's just say he's the one who gave me the arm wound," he replied as he brought up his gun.

"Oh," she said, and then remained silent. The Chief looked around for something, anything, to use against Grievous. He then saw it, the handle of a plasma sword lying by his foot.

"I'll give you one last chance, Delta Squad," said Grievous fiercely, "Come back and join the newly formed Empire and I'll spare your lives."

"You already received my answer, Grievous," said three-eight, preparing to fight for his life.

"This is it," whispered Scorch into the COM link. General Grievous raised his head and stared at three-eight in fury.

"Three-eight!" yelled the Chief, reaching down and grabbing the plasma sword, activating it, "Think fast!" He threw it to three-eight, who caught and held it up against Grievous' lightsaber. The two swords met and the plasma sword held against the lightsaber. Grievous' eyes opened in surprise, but now he was furious. He brought up the lightsaber and hit again, and three-eight blocked it with the plasma sword. The rest of Delta Squad opened fire on General Grievous and he was forced to use his other lightsabers to deflect those.

"Cortana! We need these doors open now!" yelled the Chief, who was pulling out another plasma grenade.

"Just a second," she said and concentrated hard on something. The doors then opened, "There."

"Deltas! Let's go, we got a way out!" yelled the Chief, who was standing by the door, firing at Grievous. Sev, Scorch, and Fixer backed up and went through, but three-eight was struggling with the general.

"Go ahead, three-eight, I got this one." Three-eight glanced back, and ran through the door. The Chief activated the grenade and threw it at Grievous' feet while saying, "Cortana, shut the doors." As the doors shut, the Chief dove through, leaving Grievous on the other side with the grenade.

"Lock the doors," said the Chief, and Cortana locked them and the lights on the door turned red. They all stood there in silence, waiting for something to happen on the other side. The grenade blew up, followed by a yell from Grievous. Nothing happened for a few seconds, and then a lightsaber went through the door and slowly started to cut into it.

"Move!" yelled three-eight and they all turned and ran, but before they did, the Chief grabbed Cortana's chip and inserted it into his helmet.

"Nice to be back," said Cortana.

"Do you know where they are keeping Johnson?" asked the Chief.

"Keep going, I'll give, three-eight did you call him, the directions

since he's in the lead." The Chief nodded and Cortana told three-eight where to go. Three-eight, used to this kind of thing from the clone advisor, followed the directions without a problem, except the fact that they had to reinsert Cortana into the base's system so she could lock all the doors they passed through.

The Chief was getting nervous at the small amount of Covenant they were coming upon. They'd only encountered three grunts and a jackal, all of which were put to an end mercilessly. When they finally found the door to the detention block Johnson was in, the Chief said, "Wait, stop!" The others turned around and looked at him, "What is it, Chief?"

"Have some red spots on my motion detector, big red spots on the other side." Cortana appeared on the pedestal by the door and said, "I see them too, hunters."

"Yea, you told us about those guys," said Scorch, remembering their conversation, "Big guys with armor covering their body, except for their backs, right?" The Chief nodded, and Scorch said, "Anti-armor, anyone?" The Chief, being shown one of those, said, "Yes, that would work. But try not to hit the shields they have, since that won't do anything."

"On it," said Scorch as he switched on the anti-armor attachment and took position about ten feet from the door. Everyone else took positions on the side, expecting more than hunters on the other side. Cortana, knowing what was going on, said, "Now!" The doors opened and Scorch fired. The hunters, not expecting the sudden firepower, didn't have their shields up and took heavy damage.

"Ha! How do you like that!" yelled Scorch as he kept firing. When he stopped, both hunters were dead and smoking.

"I don't think they stood a chance," said Scorch, who had switched back to his rifle and was firing at the elites that were standing behind the hunters. The Chief and the rest of Delta Squad jumped up to help. One of the elites got past all the bullets and managed to get a hit at Sev with his plasma sword.

"Ah! Never piss me off!" said Sev, who kicked the elite in the stomach, kneed him in the head, and finished him off with his DC-17.

"That's the way to do it!" yelled a familiar voice from inside one of the cells. The Chief and the others ran inside when all the elites had been killed and they saw Johnson in the farthest cell back.

"'Bout time, Chief!" he said, as if he'd been waiting in there for years.

"Come on, we've got to go," The Chief said urgently and asked, "Cortana, can you open those cell doors?"

"No, I can't, you need a password to get through, and it would take us the time we don't have right now to crack it." The Chief nodded then reached down and grabbed the bottom of the cell door. He pulled upwards and the door groaned under the pressure, then he heard the lock break and the door slid upwards.

"Glad to be out of that cell," said the Sergeant, "Stupid elites just kept ignoring me." But then they all heard a noise they all were hoping wouldn't happen, the sound of a lightsaber cutting through a door.

"Go!" yelled the Chief as he grabbed Johnson and pushed him in front of him and they ran to the door to the right, with three-eight in the lead and Scorch bringing up the rear. When they ran out there, they saw the purple lightsaber cutting an almost complete circleâ€|

They ran to the door, but they realized it was already closing.

"Cortana!" The Chief said as he and the others sprinted to the almost closed door.

"I can't override it; it's closing on its own!" They got to the door, and three-eight went through, pulling Fixer through, then Johnson, but Sev was having trouble getting through. The Chief, without thinking, grabbed the edges of the door and held it open and yelled at Sev, "Go through! Hurry up!" Sev hesitated, but then jumped through.

"Now you!" said the Chief, struggling to hold the door open.

"No way, I'm not leaving you behind!" said Scorch, "Brothers don't leave another behind!"

"You have to, I can handle it," The Chief said, slowly loosing his grip on the door. Scorch didn't reply, but he didn't move either. The Chief knew there was no convincing him, and said to Johnson, "Get Cortana back, we're going to need her." Then he let the doors close.

"No!" yelled Sev, who hit his fist against the door in anger, "We have to get that door open somehow!"

"Cortana, can you get those doors open?" asked three-eight almost desperately, not wanting to leave one of his squad members and the Chief behind.

"I can't," said Cortana quietly, "The door was deliberately closed by Grievous." Three-eight looked away, he couldn't stand leaving them behind, but they had to.

"Let's go, Deltas, Johnson," he said grimly. Fixer, who obeyed every order to the letter, followed him but Johnson and Sev remained.

"We can't leave them behind!" yelled Johnson, "You guys risked your lives to save me, now we can't just leave them behind, they'll be killed!"

"Sergeant!" yelled three-eight, "Think! Would the Chief and Scorch want you to just stay here and get killed? They're risking their lives here for us, let's not waste that!" Sergeant Johnson stood there, letting the words hit him. He knew three-eight was right, but he just didn't want to leave them behind.

"I know this is hard," said three-eight, "But we have to, and we're

going to need you since we don't know anything around here." Johnson finally gave way, and said, "Let's go." Sev still didn't move.

"Sev lets go, there's nothing we can do," said Fixer. Sev glanced back at the door, and then followed the others down the hallway.

During this debate, the Chief and Scorch had their guns pointed at the door that Grievous was cutting up. When the lightsaber had finished its circle, it stopped and was pulled out. The two of them waited, waiting for him to jump through and finish them off. A foot kicked through, then Grievous followed, but now the Chief understood why he was chasing them down.

Grievous was now only holding three lightsabers, because as far as the Chief could tell the grenade he had laid earlier had blown off one of his arms. Immediately, Scorch and the Chief started to shoot at Grievous, but he just once again deflected them. When the two of them stopped firing, the general started to laugh.

"You might as well stop trying," he said, "Either way you'll lose, but if you were to come with me, I could spare your lives. Drop your weapons, or I will be forced to kill you." The Chief thought of the two choices he had, either be killed, or go as prisoners. But then he got an idea.

"Scorch," he whispered over the COM. Scorch didn't move a muscle, but he replied, "Yea, what do you think we should do?"

"Give in." Scorch glanced quickly at him.

"Are you serious? Give in to this bucket of bolts? No way!"

"But think about it," said the Chief back, "We could have a chance to escape, and get away." Scorch was silent for a moment, and then said, "But we couldn't be given the chance, then what?"

"I never said there wouldn't be risks," was the Chief's answer.

"That's enough talking for now," cut in Grievous and threw the Chief off guard, "Give me your decision now." The Chief stood up, and tossed his gun to the side. Scorch looked at him for a second; then he, too, followed suit.

"Thought you'd see it my way," he said, then he turned around and gestured behind him, and two robot looking things jumped out. The Chief hadn't even noticed them, but they had been standing on the other side of the door way.

"Magna guards," he heard Scorch whisper and the two guards took the two soldiers hands and once again the Chief found himself handcuffed with a strange alloy he couldn't recognize, let alone break. With that, General Grievous lead the way through the door, followed by the Chief and Scorch, then the two Magna Guards followed up the rear.

* * *

>Author's note: Longest chapter yet! Tell me when they are getting too long, but I doubt they will. Thank you for not

hating me for all the cliffhangers!

8. Escape

****Author's note: ****What do you know, more replies. Also sorry about the late update, I got a late start on this chapter, so I'll try to make it long to make up for it.

Jedi Keliam Kenobi: Have you noticed that you've been the first to review for my new chapters a lot? Thanks, really appreciate it.

Warrior: Grievous may or may not be dead, but since he's one of my favorite guys, I'm changing what happens so he can live longer.

Yoshidude5371: That is NOT my name and you know it! I hate that name, and that's why I'm going to beat you when I see you next time!

xXHellsingXx: Oh yeah, I can agree.

halomasterchief: Yeah, unfinished stories suck. By the way, when I responded to your question about when this takes place, I meant to say before Halo 2, not after. Sorry if I confused you.

red ninja: Just read this chapter, and your questions will be answered. Thank you also.

The Maelstrom: You're a very criticizing person, aren't you? Anyway, I know all those grammar rules, so I'll watch what I type more carefully. As for the u, it's gone, but does it really matter? The timeline, it's happening after First Strike and before Halo 2. The elites, have you ever read the Halo books? Yeah, there are elites equal to the Chief and I'll be explaining why he can't break the handcuffs in a later chapter. Any other questions you have will probably be answered in the author's note below.

Warp Ligia Obscura: I'll be explaining why he can't break the handcuffs in a later chapter and the question about the past, he's just sent in time to test it out, not change anything. Also, I'll watch the grammar. And to point out that I'm a girl, not a guy. However, thanks for reviewing.

theamazingtecnocoloredringwraith: Thanks, but can't tell you what's going to happen yet. You're lucky you get to go on this website at school.

bobthekiller: Thank you, and here's more.

Ghost1800: Thanks, but I can't believe my story had actually has made it this far.

mix0master: Thanks for reviewing, but for RvB, I am a member and my screen name is ShotgunChief (Never would have guessed) but I'm usually never on it, so don't expect me to be.

Alan and Nicole Corran: Thank you, but just wondering, is this Alan or Nicole?

TheHolyDarkness: I'll try adding more of that stuff in, but I can't guarantee it.

Xenomoose: Yeah, Grievous is sweet. Also, nice stormtrooper story, just read it about ten minutes ago.

ShadowHawk: Here's more

I think I need to clear up a few things

1. This story is happening in between the book First Strike and before Halo 2

2. When the Chief goes back into the past, he doesn't need to change anything, he's just testing it out.

3. If you've read my profile, you'll notice that I'm a girl, not a guy. But I don't really care what you think I am as long as you review!

4. Some of you will notice that I helped my cousin, Republic Chief, write his fanfic, but he truly does get the credit for all the ideas. I mostly just proofread for him.

Also, I'm not sure if I can reply to reviews anymore, I took up a page on Microsoft Word with just this author's note! If you're question is really important, or it gets repeated, I'll answer it, but sorry, don't expect any more replies!

Sorry for the really long author's note, here's what you're really want.

* * *

>Escape

Sergeant Johnson lead the way as the four of them navigated the halls, trying to find a way out of the Covenant base. Cortana helped to the best of her abilities, but she was having trouble mapping a route, as the Covenant were still trying to capture her.

No one was talking, except when they had to ask Cortana which way to go. When they got to a door larger than the others, they stopped.

"This is it," said Cortana, appearing on the pedestal, "It's the exit. But I advise you to take out your guns, since they are expecting you." With that, three-eight, Sev, and Fixer took out their DC-17's, and Johnson the plasma rifle he had picked up. When Cortana saw that they were ready, she opened the door, but she immediately saw something wrong.

"Move back!" she yelled at them. They looked at her, and then ran back a second before a huge ball of plasma exploded where they had been standing.

"Wraith!" said Johnson, who recognized the tank outside the door. They took cover behind the pillars that were there.

"Blast, doesn't this thing ever quit?" asked three-eight as the wraith continued firing for another five minutes. But Cortana ignored him, looking at the Covenant that were behind the tank. There were about a hundred, all mixed up with grunts, jackals, elites, and a few hunters. Cortana knew that the three from Delta Squad and Johnson couldn't possibly hold them off.

"Cortana!" yelled Johnson over all the explosions from the tank, "Try to call for help!" Cortana nodded, and sent out a transmission on the COM link, "Any UNSC forces come in. I repeat, come in." She waited for a little bit, then repeated, "Any UNSC forces, we need assistance!" She was then surprised when a voice answered, "I copy, this is Sergeant Greg Carter. Cortana, is that you?"

"Affirmative, but can't chat, we need immediate assistance, sending our coordinates now."

"Got them, I'm on my way."

* * *

>General Grievous lead the way through the cut open doors as they made their way back to the time portal. The Chief, already having a plan, was waiting patiently for the right moment. <p>"Uh, Chief, you got a way out of this, don't you?"<p>

"Just follow my lead," The Chief replied as they walked back into the Prophet's chamber. There was no sign of any Covenant, and the Chief knew Grievous had seen to that. As they reached the portal, The Chief braced himself, ready to take action. As Grievous stepped in front of the portal, the Chief lunged, knocking Grievous into it.

The two of them turned around just in time to see the MagnaGaurds swinging at them with their staffs. The one attacking the Chief swung low, making him jump to avoid it. Scorch on the other hand had a more brutal guard, and it swung at an uppercut. Scorch, meaning to block it with his handcuffs, was surprised when the staff cut right through it, freeing him. Scorch stood there for a moment, but then decided to swing at the guard's head.

The guard brought up his staff to block it, and Scorch punched the staff. The staff didn't give way an inch, and Scorch brought his hand back, yelling, "Fierfek!" The Chief had no clue what that meant, but didn't engage the matter, as he was too busy trying to fend off his own guard.

The Chief faked a hit to the head then brought up his leg in lightning fast speed to hit the guard in the abdomen. The guard staggered a bit, but kept its balance. It then swung over its head, but the Chief threw his handcuffs in the way. A moment later his hands were also free.

"Chief! We got to get out of here! Grievous will be back any second!" yelled Scorch as he dodged another swing to the head. The Chief knew this, but unless they could get rid of these guards, they weren't going anywhere. Then he got an idea.

"Scorch, catch!" and he threw a plasma grenade to him, and then took out his own, "On my mark!" Scorch caught it and nodded.

"Mark!" yelled the Chief, and then they both activated it and threw it at the MagnaGuards. The guards, who weren't expecting this, tried to pull off the grenade. When it wouldn't come off, they panicked, but not for long since the grenade exploded a second later, taking them with it.

"Let's go," said the Chief and they made their way to the door, which now had a huge hole in the middle of it.

"Cortana!" yelled the Chief as he made a vain attempt to reach her, but for all he knew, they could already be gone.

But in fact, Cortana did hear him, and she started a scan to figure out where he was. She saw him, along with Scorch, running down the corridor just outside the Prophet's chamber.

"Guys," she said to the others, who were still under fire from the Wraith, "I found out where the Chief and Scorch are. I'm going to help them."

"They're still alive?" asked Sev in disbelief, but she had already gone into the base's system and appeared on a pedestal outside the door the Chief and Scorch were coming through. The Chief turned and saw her, and said, "So you heard me?" Cortana smiled, and then said, "Where's Grievous? I'm not picking up his life signs anywhere. You didn't kill him, did you?"

"He pushed him into the portal," said Scorch, gesturing to the Chief.

"I'm sure he was happy," replied Cortana.

"I don't know, I haven't seen him since I pushed him in." Cortana was about to ask them something else until she picked something up from the chambers.

"Chief," said Cortana urgently, "He's back!" The Chief glanced over his shoulder, as if to see if he was there, then said, "Better not stick around to make sure," and he and Scorch took off down the next corridor, with Cortana once again entering the system.

The two of them kept jumping through the holes in the door, trying to keep ahead of Grievous. When they reached the door that had cut them off from the others, Scorch found the console the general had used and Cortana opened it. But now they could hear Grievous catching up to them. They sprinted, trying desperately now to stay ahead.

Meanwhile, the other four were still hiding behind the pillars, which the Wraith was still shooting at.

"If I don't get to kill something soon, I'm just going to run out there!" But Johnson's last words were drowned out by the sound of missile firing. They all peaked out and saw a Pelican drop ship firing at the Wraith. Within moments, the tank was a smoking wreck. The Pelican continued to fire at the other Covenant forces, but lowered to pick up the soldiers that were pinned there. A few marines jumped out to help them, firing with their battle rifles at the few Covenant who got too close. The Delta Squad and Johnson got in, then the marines. One of the marines, which had a sergeant insignia on his

shoulder, made a hand gesture to the pilot, who started to take off.

"Wait, don't go yet!" yelled Johnson to the pilot, who looked around to ask, "Why not? You're all here."

"Not all of us, you're forgetting a man that's about a foot taller than you."

The pilot's face lit up, "The Chief was here?"

"Never mind that," said the sergeant, who was obviously Sergeant Carter, "We can't wait long, otherwise we'll be killed." Johnson nodded, but still looked down desperately to see if they had made it yet. His heart then missed a beat when he saw the two of them run out, but then sank as he saw what was chasing themâ€

When the Chief and Scorch made it to the doors, the Chief paused for a split second to grab Cortana, and then caught back up with Scorch. He glanced backwards, and saw in surprise that General Grievous was right behind them. He then watched as Grievous lunged, making a desperate attempt to stop them. One of his lightsabers caught Scorch in the back of the leg, and with a cry of pain, he fell down.

The others watched helplessly as Scorch fell and Grievous advanced upon them. Sev jumped up and pulled out his blaster rifle, but three-eight grabbed his shoulder and forced him back down. Johnson then yelled, "Shoot him!" The pilot, having no clue what was going on, shot at Grievous. The general, not used to having projectile weapons shot at him, was caught off guard and was forced backwards.

"Get down there!" yelled three-eight. Even though the marines had no idea who he was, they obeyed and lowered to pick them up, still shooting at Grievous.

The Chief bent down and helped Scorch get up, then put his arm around his shoulder and helped him walk towards the Pelican. Three-eight helped pull Scorch up while Fixer got up to help the Chief.

"Now you can go," said Johnson. The Pelican stopped firing and took off, leaving Grievous behind.

General Grievous calmly stood up, deactivated his lightsabers, and reattached them to his belt. He glanced down at where his fourth arm should be, and then formed his two other arms to become one, so he now had only two arms again. He felt ashamed that the commandoes had gotten away so easily, but if it wasn't for that fifth one, he would have had them. _Oh well,_ he thought, _they'll be mine next time._

And he'd be sure to kill the green one first.

* * *

>Author's note: Right now, I just finished Star Wars: Labyrinth of Evil (anyone read it?) and I am reading Revenge of the Sith, so my Star Wars part of the story should be more accurate. Other than that, please review!

9. Gearing Up

****Author's note: ****Ok, I'm going to be nice and reply to your reviews, but only those who ask questions. I also finished Revenge of the Sith and Hard Contact, great books. And the updates are going to be longer, SORRY! But I have a whole bunch of tests and homework so I have to work on that too. But summers coming so you'll have a bunch of new updates then, and maybe even a new Fanfic.

Warrior: Yeah, I'm just read that one, that was a sweet book.

ChaosWolf021: No, he can pull his arms apart and put them back together at will, it's how he was built.

red ninja: Actually, I was thinking of putting a warthog scene in there later, but it'll be there.

halomasterchief: Yeah, if you would play Republic Commando, you'd know what it means. But Fierfek is the commando's swear word. As for the Spartans, I'll try to put them in, (because I do like them), but don't expect it.

Okay, that's it. Onward!

* * *

>Gearing Up

The Master Chief leaned back in his seat, and let out a sigh of relief, something he had not done for a while.

"I heard that," said Cortana, who was still in his helmet.

"How's Scorch?" asked the Chief, ignoring her remark.

"He'll be fine, a couple of days or so for it to heal, then he'll be back out on the battlefield again," she answered, "As for you, you'd better get that arm checked out." He'd been rejecting help ever since Grievous had first tried to kill him, so he agreed.

"It's deep," said the medic that was aboard, "But you didn't lose enough blood to take any affect, put some of this on." The doctor handed the Chief a can of bio-foam, which he took and set it aside while he took of his armor down to his arm, which meant he removed his helmet too. The Chief was pure white because he never saw the sun beneath his MJOLNIR armor. Three-eight heard the hiss as the helmet was taken off, and paused in taking Scorch's armor around his leg off and looked up.

"Jeez, Chief, you need to get a tan," he said. The Chief didn't answer but smiled, and sprayed some bio-foam into his wound, which stung, but wasn't anything he couldn't handle. But Scorch, who was used to the fast healing bacta, didn't like it.

"Blast, why does it have to sting so much!" he said in reply to the stinging in his leg.

"You're just lucky that he missed the bone, or you would be feeling a

lot more than the stinging," answered Fixer, who was in the seat next to Scorch.

"Who the hell are you guys anyway?" asked Johnson, who hadn't asked before. The Chief couldn't help but smile again, thinking of how Sev had first asked him that question aboard the Republic dropship, and said, "Well, three-eight, we seemed to have switched positions in a matter of days."

"Yeah, no kidding," replied three-eight, then replied to Johnson, "We're from the past." Sergeant Carter just stared at him, but Johnson just replied, "Yeah, figured as much, but what's with all the armor? You could be the Chief's relative for all I know!"

"Let's wait until we're in a more secure area," answered the Chief, "Where are heading anyway?"

"To In Amber Clad, sir," answered the pilot, "Then that'll take us to Cairo Station." The Chief nodded, replaced the rest of his armor, which made a POP sound as the shields recharged, and lay against the back of his seat.

It was good to be home.

* * *

>General Grievous walked back into the Covenant base and to the prophet's chamber, where two more of his MagnaGaurds awaited him.
<p>"Clean out this place of anything that moves," ordered Grievous and the two guards ran into the hallway. As long as those commandoes survived, he'd have to stay here. There could be no witnesses to the changes of the Republic. No, he corrected himself, the Empire. He also couldn't believe that one of the commandoes and the green armored one had managed to defeat his guards. Even Kenobi had had trouble defeating them.

Just then, another guard had appeared and said, "A message from Lord Sidious." Grievous nodded and took the hologram projector and told the guard, "Go help the others clean this place out." It nodded and went into the hallway after the others. He then placed the projector on the ground and knelt. The ghostly image of Darth Sidious appeared.

"Master," Grievous said, "What is thy bidding?"

"Have you killed the clones yet?" he asked, underneath his black hood he always wore.

"Not yet, my master, but they will be dead soon enough."

"This is not like you, General," he said, "Perhaps I should send my new apprentice, Darth Vader, instead?" Just then, Darth Vader walked in besides Sidious, breathing heavily through his black mask that kept him alive. Grievous glanced up for a moment, to see him, then bowed his head once more, "No, my lord, I will find them. It's that fifth one that's giving me the trouble."

"Fifth one?" asked Sidious, who had not yet learned of him.

"Yes, he is the same as them, master, but his weaponry is new and I

am not used to it yet, giving them the advantage."

"Find them soon, General, or I will send Darth Vader to replace you." Then the hologram disappeared and Grievous picked up the projector. He crushed it in his hand, to erase the conversation they just had, but that was not the only reason. He couldn't let himself be replaced by the new apprentice. He'd prove himself worthy.

* * *

>The Chief lead the way through the hallways on *Cairo Station*, with the rest of Delta Squad following him. They were reporting to Lord Hood, who was in charge of Cairo Station, and its MAC guns, which could punch a hole through a Covenant cruiser easily.

"Do you think Grievous stayed here or went back?" asked Fixer.

"Knowing him, he stayed," answered Scorch, limping, "But how did he get through the time portal?" Wouldn't it kill him without shields, like us?"

"It's probably the droid in him that kept him alive," answered three-eight.

"So if he's only part droid," asked the Chief, "What's the other part?"

"Alien," replied three-eight, "But we don't know what type he is."

"That's why his guards were there too," said Scorch.

"His guards were there?" asked Sev in surprise.

"Yeah," answered the Chief, "We blew them up with plasma grenades though."

"It was great," said Scorch happily. Just then they arrived at the bridge, where Lord Hood was.

He was there, looking at the screens that showed Earth, where they were currently stationed. When he heard them approach, he turned. The Chief saluted, and the Deltas followed his lead. Hood returned the gesture, and said, "At ease." They lowered their hands, and he said, "So this is the Delta Squad I've been hearing about."

"Yes, sir," replied three-eight. Lord Hood looked at him, "Are you the squad leader?"

Three-eight nodded, "Yes, sir."

"What's your name?"

"Delta-38, sir," he responded. Hood smiled, "Well, you and the Chief have a lot in common. But do you have a name, or nickname I should know about?"

"No, sir, but they do," and he gestured to the rest of his

squad.

"And they are?"

"Delta-40, Fixer."

"Delta-62, Scorch."

"Delta-07, Sev." Lord Hood nodded, "Nice to meet you, but you might want to get that leg checked out," he said gesturing to the wound in Scorch's leg.

"I already have sir, thank you," he replied.

"Chief, you have a similar wound in your arm," Hood said, "What happened to you two, and where are you guys from?" The Chief had been ready for this, so he started out how he and Johnson had been captured on Jecovah, how he was forced to go in the time portal, and then he met up with Scorch and the rest of Delta Squad, then how their ship was shot down and that night they had been attacked by Grievous.

"Grievous?" asked Hood, "Who's he?"

"A general of the enemy army back in my time," answered three-eight, "He's deadly sir, as you can tell with the Chief and six-two here." Lord Hood examined the Chief's wound and asked, "What kind of weapon did that? I've never seen a wound like it."

"A lightsaber, sir," replied three-eight. Hood just looked at him, "A lightsaber? Is it a weapon used in your time?" Three-eight nodded, "It's a sword with energy that can cut through pretty much any material."

"Almost like a plasma sword, sir," said the Chief. Hood nodded, "Please continue."

They finished the rest of the story, including the part where they split up; with three-eight explaining his part of the story and the Chief his.

"That's when we took off from Jecovah and went to In Amber Clad, and that took us here," the Chief finished.

"That's one hell of a story Chief," said Hood in awe, but his voice suddenly got cold, "But I've got some bad news. The Covenant are closing in on Earth, and we only have a day or two till they get here and the fighting begins." The Chief wasn't shocked, he was ready to fight, as long as it was on Earth, and not in a space battle. He hated fighting in space, he felt so worthless. He looked at the others, who nodded, and said, "What do you want us to do, sir?"

"By the time the Covenant get here, you two should be healed and ready to fight again. We'll hold them off as long as we can, us, the Athens, and the Malta, but once they break through our MAC guns, you five will be sent to Earth to defend it. Sergeant Johnson will brief you when you arrive there. Are we clear?" All five said, "Yes, sir!"

"Good, why don't you head to the armory and gear up. I'll let you

know if there is a change in plans." He saluted and the others returned it, then they left the bridge.

"Scorch, you should probably rest, you'll be no use if your leg is broken," said Sev, noticing that Scorch was limping more.

"I'll be fine; some little cut isn't going to slow me down."

"It will if you keep limping on it," said three-eight, "Get your gear ready then I want you resting."

"Yes, sir," responded Scorch, who wouldn't disobey a direct order. They continued on to the armory, where Sergeant Gunns was.

"You the new guys?" he asked, and three-eight nodded, "Then you obviously want some new gear, but Chief, I've got something for you."

"What?" he asked.

"You've got some new armor, Mark VI, why don't you try it on and we'll test it out."

The Chief walked into a separate room, where he could see the armor. Three mechanics helped him take off his old armor, and then put on his new Mark VI armor. When they sealed his suit, he heard the familiar POP as his shields recharged. He walked back into the armory, where the others were still waiting.

"Nice suit, Chief," said Scorch.

"Let's make sure it works, so we're going to go through a few tests..."

The others watched as he was put through a couple of tests including his targeting and shield recharging. When they were done, Gunns went to help Delta Squad gear up while the Chief picked out a Battle Rifle, a Shotgun and a few grenades. He then watched Delta Squad get their weapons.

"We're not used to projectile weapons," said three-eight, examining the Battle Rifle.

"If you don't use projectile, what else is there?" asked Gunns, obviously amused. Scorch tossed him his DC-17, "Safety's on the side." The sergeant took it and went to the shooting range, when he came back, he asked, "How'd you make a gun like this?"

"Not even going to try and explain," said Sev. Once they had finished, they took their gear and went up to their sleeping quarters. When they got their, all five of them took off their armor, but the Chief noticed they looked alike, almost identical.

"How do you guys look so much alike?"

"We didn't tell you why?" asked Scorch, "Stupid of us, well, we're all clones."

"You're clones?" asked the Chief, surprised.

"Yeah, there are thousands of us, but we're the elite kind, commandoes," said Fixer.

"Wow," said the Chief, "Your technology is a lot more advanced than ours. We haven't learned how to clone humans yet."

"The Kaminoans, the creatures that raised us, took off DNA from a bounty hunter called Jango Fett and cloned us," explained three-eight.

Just then their conversation was interrupted when _Cairo Station_ suddenly shook, almost unbalancing them.

"What the fierfek was that?" asked Sev. He was answered by a voice over the speakers saying, _The Covenant have arrived, everyone to their battle stations. I repeat everyone to their battle stations._ The Chief recognized Cortana's voice, which meant that Lord Hood was too busy with something else to give the order.

"I though the Covenant weren't supposed to be here for another couple of days!" said Sev, who was already getting his armor back on.

"Well, they obviously didn't want to make us wait," answered Scorch.

"Then we better be ready," said the Chief.

* * *

>Author's note: I know, a little boring, but the next chapter's going to be good. I also realize that I'm not following the Star Wars and Halo timeline to the letter, and I'm sorry if that upsets anyone. But I saw Revenge of the Sith, good movie but I still think The Empire Strikes Back is the best. Other than that, please review!

10. Defending Cairo

****Author's note: ****Replies to you questions

Darth Irule: I probably should have but then what would a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away mean?

Lieutenant Rusty: Their stickin' to their own guns, because they don't have enough ammo and the marines don't have the materials to make new DC's.

The Maelstorm: Glad you think I'm improving, but in Labyrinth of Evil, Grievous asks Sidious what is thy bidding, so I'm just going along those terms. Yes, I made a mistake on the clones, but technically, they still haven't mastered cloning enough to make an army. I also realized that the deltas are a little out of character, but I'm working on changing that.

Delta-62 Scorch: Nice penname, but yea I've read the Halo novels, their good. Btw, it's Johnson who gets infected and becomes immune, not Locklear. And there are no other Spartans right now except for the Chief, (Or is there?i•Š), but he wouldn't check into the armory

because the Chief hasn't been to Cairo Station yet.

Okay, that's it. Wow, lots of you like Return of the Jedi, but I still like Empire Strikes Back. I'm finally into the double digits, sweet! Thanks to everyone else that reviewed though and here's the next chapter.

* * *

>Defending Cairo

When Delta Squad and the Chief had all their armor, they grabbed their weapons. The Deltas all had their DC's, but they also grabbed the UNSC guns they had picked out since their ammo wouldn't last long. Three-eight, Fixer, and Scorch (though he had been eyeing the Rocket Launcher) had grabbed a Battle Rifle and Sev both a Battle Rifle and a Sniper. Before they had left the quarters, a marine came in.

"The Covenant are trying to board and Sergeant Johnson wants you down there ASAP! Follow me!" They followed him out into the hallway, which was filled with marines holding Battle Rifles and SMGs.

"Come on!" yelled the marine and they followed him out of the hallway down to an area by the bridge. There, Johnson was waiting with a few other marines.

"They've boarded," he explained, then pointed at Sev, "You good with a Sniper?"

"Blowing off the enemy's head is my specialty," he said, taking out the Sniper Rifle.

"Good, set up over there," he answered and turned to the Chief.

"There are a lot," he said then grinned, "But I'm sure we can handle it." The Chief nodded and said to three-eight, "Set up anyway you want, but there's a lot coming so be careful."

"I read you, Chief," he replied, "Scorch, you take left and Fixer, you take right and flank them." The Chief already saw what he was planning and joined Fixer on the right, while three-eight went beside Scorch.

"Don't work yourself too hard, Scorch. I haven't forgotten about your leg," Three-eight said to Scorch over their sealed COM link.

"I'll be fine boss," he replied, "You worry too much."

"Well, you guys seem to know what you're doin'," said Johnson, "Move it, sissies, blow those bastards apart! Just don't get in their line of fire or you'll be looking as ugly as those split-lips!" The marines ran down the stairs and positioned themselves. As soon as they were set, the door flung open and about a dozen Grunts came in, followed by two dozen elites. As soon as they came in, the three Deltas and the Chief opened fire, and the elites were once again caught off guard from the Delta's weapons. The marines started to open fire as well, with Johnson manning the machine gun. Sev fired once in a while with his sniper, taking out some of the elites in the

back.

The Chief saw a Grunt get through the fray and try running away. He turned to take it out when he heard Sev yell to him, "Chief, hit the deck!" He did, only to see a plasma sword fly over his head. He dove forward, rolled to his feet, and turned to confront the Elite that had tried to behead him. Sev already seemed to be on top of that and shot him in the head. The Elite howled in pain and fell over.

The Chief nodded to Sev then helped take out the rest of the Covenant. Once they were wiped out, Johnson said, "Meet up with you later, Chief. I got to take care of some business." The Chief led the way as they continued to defend _Cairo Station_.

* * *

>"General, come see this," said one of Grievous's guards as they stood before the display screens.<p><p>

"What is it?" he asked as he walked over to the screen. On it he saw unknown ships fighting each other, blasting each other apart. He narrowed his eyes, "That's where those commandos were heading." He looked at the planet beside it, "What planet is that?" The guard typed in a few controls and the screen zoomed in on it, labeling it Earth. "One side of that battle is trying to take it over," he said with experience from watching many space battles, "And the others are defending it, and somehow the commandos are caught up in it." He turned to the guard, "Get whatever ship that is in this place and get it ready for departure." The guard nodded and ran out the room. Grievous went back to looking at the screen, "The commandos won't be in action much longer."

* * *

>"Grenade!" Scorch called as he activated a plasma grenade and hurled it at an Elite. It hit him in the face and the elite yelled in fury before it blew up. "I can really get used to these."<p><p>

"As long as you don't stick them to one of us, I've seen your aim," said Sev.

"Haven't seen you throw one," he replied.

"That's because I've been killing all the Covenant that you miss, which is a lot."

"Keep the COM link clean, you two," said Fixer before Scorch could come up with a comeback, "We have more important things to do."

"Every time, Fixer," said Scorch.

"Come on, Deltas, move out," said three-eight and they went into the next hallway. Sev was in front and Scorch was bringing up the rear. Three-eight noticed that Scorch was fallen a little behind, and he was limping far more than earlier. He slowed down to walk besides Scorch.

"I'm fine boss, really," he said as soon as three-eight matched his pace.

"From the looks of it your not," replied three-eight.

"It hurts a little bit," Scorch admitted. Three-eight sighed and shook his head, "What am I going to do with you?"

"Well, you can let me fight," said Scorch. Three-eight smiled behind his helmet, "All right, but as soon as we're done you're going to rest."

"Yes, sir." They kept moving until they met up with Johnson again, who was with a few other marines and a commander three-eight could tell from the sign on her shoulder. They were hiding behind some boxes and getting shot at by some Covenant at the other end.

"Nice of you to drop by, Chief," said Johnson.

"We've got this one, Johnson," said the Chief.

"Well, you better have!" he replied. The Chief took lead and started to flatten the Covenant forces, with the help of Delta Squad. When they were all killed, the Commander said, "Thanks, Chief, I owe you one." The Chief didn't reply and moved on into a hallway that led to the outside.

"You're suits are vacuum sealed, right?" the Chief asked. When three-eight nodded, he opened the door by pressing a button on the wall. Three-eight didn't know how he saw it, but the Chief yelled to Fixer, who was about to go through the door, to move. Just as he did, two Elites with jetpacks jumped into the entrance and fired their plasma rifles. Everyone took cover, including Fixer, and started to return fire. The Elites retreated outside the door where they couldn't see them. Three-eight turned towards the Chief, "How'd you do that?"

"Know the Elites were there?" he asked, "Motion tracker on my HUD." And he tapped his helmet.

"We need one of those, you know," said Scorch. They formed up and approached the door cautiously, looking to the Chief to tell them if the Elites were going to attack again. They didn't, and they continued outside, which led to the zero-gee atmosphere. The path stopped outside the door, and they had to jump down to the lower level. They looked around for the Elites, but couldn't find them.

"They're still here," said the Chief, "They never give up without a fight."

"Chief," three-eight heard over the COM, it was Cortana, "The Malta has driven off their borders, but I don't like the looks of it." Just then a huge explosion went off, and the Malta was completely destroyed in bright flash of light. The five of them just stood in shock, and then Scorch said, "I would've enjoyed that if so many people hadn't been killed in it."

"Cortana, what was that?" asked the Chief.

"I'm not sure, but I'm figuring it out now," she replied, and then the COM link went dead.

"We should move on, and watch out for those Elites," said the Chief. The others nodded and followed him to a door that led back to the inside. The Chief suddenly turned around and started to fire at a point above three-eight's head. Delta Squad turned around to see the two elites were back and they were firing on their position.

"Take cover!" three-eight yelled. He then heard Scorch cry out, and he turned to see a third elite standing over Scorch, with his plasma rifles aimed at him. Three-eight grabbed his Battle Rifle and emptied a whole clip into the Elite. It fell backwards off of Scorch, dead. Three-eight ran over to kneel beside him and asked, "Are you alright?"

"Yeah, I think so," he replied, "The coward snuck up behind me and hit me over the head." Three-eight helped him up and the two of them took up their guns and helped take out the last of the Elites.

"What happened?" asked the Chief.

"Nothing, just a third Elite snuck up on me," replied Scorch. Fixer interrupted them by saying, "Uh-oh." They turned to see what was wrong, and he pointed to the Athens. They all looked, and saw that the Covenant were now retreating from the Athens. With a sinking feeling, three-eight knew what was going to happen and a second later the Athens exploded. Over the COM link, he heard Lord Hood, "Cortana, do you know what happened?"

"Yes, both had a bomb implanted in it."

"Well, they sure as hell brought one here. Chief, Deltas, find it," he then signed off.

* * *

>Lord Hood then returned to looking at the screens. His hands gripped the railing tightly as he thought about the one question that was going through his mind. *Why is this Covenant fleet so small?* He just couldn't think of an answer. Just then, one of his Lieutenants looked up and said, "Sir, incoming transmission."

"Who's it from?" he asked.

"It's unknown, sir." Hood thought about it briefly, it was probably something about the Covenant.

"Send it through," he said and the Lieutenant nodded and tapped a few buttons. Then someone, or something, appeared on the screen. It had a skull like mask and a cape was hanging over its shoulders, but it appeared to be on a Covenant ship.

Hood narrowed his eyes, "Who are you?"

"I'm sure your new friends have told you about me," it said in a robot like voice. Hood's eyes opened in surprise, "General Grievous?"

"Exactly."

"What are you doing here?"

"I saw this war going on and I thought I should join in," he replied.

"That's not the only reason you're here," Hood said coldly.

"So you know I'm after the commandos," he acknowledged, then suddenly said, "Give them up, you can't protect them."

Hood drew himself up to his full height, "Are you willing to challenge that?"

"Are you willing to give up the lives of your army?" he retorted, "You've obviously seen what I'm capable of doing." He then reached toward his belt and pulled out a handle of some sort. He pressed a button on it, and a purple beam came out. It was the lightsaber three-eight had told him about.

"If you think you're going to scare me into doing it, then you're wrong."

"Still no?" asked Grievous, "You'll regret it." Then the screen went blank.

"Sir! His ship is heading towards Earth!" a Lieutenant called out.

"Shoot it down!" he yelled, but it was too late. It was already in Earth's atmosphere and still going.

"Track it, see where it lands."

"I can't," the Lieutenant replied, "He's resisting it somehow." Hood closed his eyes and took a deep breath. This General Grievous was a real threat to the UNSC now, and he'd have to deal with it somehow. He contacted three-eight and the others.

The Chief and the others were about to enter the elevator when Lord Hood contacted them, "Chief, let me talk to three-eight." Three-eight was a little surprised, he barely knew the man, but he answered, "I'm here, sir."

"Just had a little chat with someone you know," he said over his and three-eight's sealed COM link. Three-eight could only think of one other person, and he wasn't a person at all, "General Grievous?"

"Yes, somehow he knew who I was."

"What did he say?" asked three-eight.

"He asked me to hand you four over."

"Did you?" three-eight asked, not knowing if he could trust him.

"Of course not, you think I would sink down to that level? I told him no and he threatened me and the UNSC."

"Sir, you don't have toâ€¦"

"Cut it out, you and the rest of Delta Squad are my men, and I don't just send my men to their deaths." Three-eight sighed, he knew he was right.

"All right sir, we'll have that bomb in no time."

"Good," he replied then the COM link went dead.

* * *

>Author's note: Well, there you go. So close for school to be out, finally! The chapter after this one is still going to be a kinda long update but after that itll probably be summer, but im gonna be gone june 14th-17th on a trip, but ill make it up to you. Other than that, please review!

11. One is Lost

****Author's note:**** We've done this enough times for you to know what's next, but if you're new, here are replies to your questions.

red ninja: Yeah, I thought that too. I'll just say it turned off from now on.

Delta-62 Scorch: I would, but Grievous is too close to Earth now. By the way, that square that was in my last reply that was supposed to be a smiley.

TheAmazingTecnocolorRingWraith: I am being a little hard on Earth, but Earth does get its ass kicked in Halo 2â€|

The Maelstrom: Sorry! I have really got to get those figured out.

atoz: I might do that, but it would probably be hard for the Cov. to forgive him for slaughtering all the Covenant at the base. And I haven't played KotOR, but I heard it's good. That will be the next game I try out.

drunkenwerewolf: Yes, I have played Halo on Legendary, just a few more levels I have to do, but if I do go back to the SW universe, then yes I will but the mercs in there.

Firefox116: I don't know if I'm going back to the Star Wars universe but I'll probably put Darth Vader in the story. And finally someone agrees with me on Empire Strikes Back!

That's all the questions, but I want to ask you something. I looked on my favorites list and I saw that about 24 of you have my fanfic on your favorite list, but when I looked at the list, about only half of you actually reviewed for it. Please review for my story so I know you like it, (But if it's on your favorite's list then you probably like it), I know where you live, but not really. And I know I'm going by the game right now, but I'm just going to finish this 'level' then it's pretty much going to be made up from then on. Sorry if that bothered anybody, and sorry if you liked me going by the game. Thanks for everyone who reviewed though! Okay, that's it, moving on.

* * *

>One is Lost

The Chief and the others entered the room with the bomb, but there were also about a dozen elites and a few grunts guarding it.

"Already got it covered," said Scorch as he brought out a plasma grenade.

"We better all throw grenades if we're going to take them out in one shot," said three-eight, bringing out a thermal detonator. Everyone followed suit, bringing out a grenade. "All right, everyone on three," said Fixer.

"Why is it always three? Can't it be six, or two?" asked Scorch.

"Can it, Scorch," replied Fixer, "On three, one, two, three!" All five of them primed their grenades and threw them into the throng of Covenant. The Covenant were caught off guard and were hit by the explosion from the grenades. Only two Elites and a Grunt survived, and they quickly took them out with a couple of shots.

"Me-inside-your-head-now," Cortana said urgently on the pedestal and the Chief reached down to grab her chip, inserted it into his head, and placed his hand on the bomb. The bomb made a few more beeping noises then stopped.

"How much time was left?" asked the Chief.

"I bet it was one," said Sev, "It's always one." The Chief then reached down and grabbed two of the spikes on the bomb and started to drag it towards the elevator.

"Uh, Chief, what are you doing?" asked Scorch.

"Giving the Covenant back their bomb," he replied, "You should go meet up with Johnson, he'll need you," the elevator doors shut and he started downward.

Three-eight had a bad feeling about this.

"Is he doing what I think he's doing?" asked Scorch.

"I don't know," replied three-eight, "But we better do what he says, come on." Delta Squad then headed for a different elevator and went also down. In the elevator three-eight contacted Johnson, "Sergeant, where are you? We need to meet up."

"Docking Bay 12," he replied on the other end, "Hurry your ass up, we're about to take off."

"Copy that," said three-eight then he shut off the COM link. Five minutes later they were in Docking Bay 12 where In Amber Clad was waiting.

"Come on!" yelled Johnson, "We've got to pick up the Chief!" The

Deltas ran the rest of the way there and into the ship. Johnson followed them in and the door shut and _In Amber Clad_ took off from _Cairo Station._

"Johnson," asked three-eight, "What do you mean 'pick up the Chief'?"

"You'll see," answered Johnson. In a few minutes a loud thud was heard and Johnson said, "For a brick, he flew pretty good." Sev looked out the window and saw the Covenant ship that the Chief had just blown up and he muttered, "Show off."

"Chief, get inside," said the Commander named Keyes, "We're taking this fight to the surface." Just then a door opened briefly and the Chief climbed in.

"How'd you pull that off?" asked Scorch in awe.

"Never mind," replied the Chief, "We better get ready."

"Except for Scorch," cut in three-eight. Scorch was about to object but then stopped, he knew he'd never win.

"Alright," said Scorch glumly, "But the moment it heals I'm back out fighting."

"Fair enough," said three-eight, "But what are we doing once we get to Earth?"

"We have a camp set up outside Metropolis," said the Chief, "We're grouping up there then we're going to try and take Metropolis."

"Chief, won't they know we're coming?" asked Fixer.

"We figure they already know," he replied, "That's why they need us down there." Just then, Johnson came into the room and said, "We better get those Pelicans ready. Chief, figure out who's going on which Pelican, but hurry up, we only have three but we need to get situated." He left the room and the Chief turned back to the others.

"Any suggestions?"

"You make the call on this one, Chief," replied three-eight. The Chief stood still for a moment, as if thinking, then said, "Fixer, you're with me, three-eight and Sev, you'll each be on a different pelican. Are we clear? Oh yeah, Cortana's coming with us too." Three-eight looked around at the others, who nodded, then said, "We're clear."

"Then let's move out," said the Chief, then he left the room and Fixer and Sev followed him, but three-eight stayed behind with Scorch. Scorch was taking off his helmet, when it was off; he looked at three-eight.

"You have to do this too me, don't you?" Three-eight sighed, "If I had a choice you'd be coming with us."

"Come on, I can still fight, and we haven't heard from Grievous since

we escaped. I'd be fine."

"On the last part, you're wrong," said three-eight.

"What, the part about me being fine?" asked Scorch, and when three-eight shook his head, Scorch's eyes opened wide and he said, "You've heard from Grievous?"

"Not necessarily me," he replied, "Him and Lord Hood had a little chat." Scorch then narrowed his eyes, "About what, Boss?"

"About us, of course, Grievous demanded that Hood hand us over and when he didn't, Grievous got pissed and threatened him. That would probably mean heading to Earth." Scorch sat there for a moment, and then said, "I see your point now, sir." Three-eight walked up to him and clapped his hand on Scorch's shoulder, "I've been your leader for too long to take any risks that would kill you." Scorch looked him in the eye and smiled, "Proud to serve under you, Boss." Three-eight returned the smile, though Scorch couldn't see it under the helmet, and said, "I'm proud to lead you." He then gave Scorch's shoulder a little shake, and then he turned around and went after the others.

* * *

>When three-eight entered the docking bay with the three Pelicans, the Chief didn't ask him what took him so long. He already had it figured out. The Chief climbed into the Pelican with Johnson and said, "Are we ready to take off?"<p><p>

"Hell yeah, I've been ready for a long time." The Chief nodded, "I'll tell the others." He then walked back outside the Pelican and found the other three grouped up, waiting for orders.

"We're ready to go, Deltas," he said.

"Which Pelican should we take, Chief?" asked three-eight.

"Fixer, you're coming with me, three-eight, you can take the middle one, and Sev, the last one." They all nodded and three-eight said, "Move out, Deltas!" The Chief then headed into his Pelican along with Fixer, three-eight to his, and Sev to his.

"We're ready, Johnson," said the Chief.

"Finally!" he replied then made a gesture to the pilot, who nodded and started to take off. The pilots of the other two Pelicans got the message and followed suit. Three-eight's Pelican was in the lead, with the Chief's and Sev's of to the side. And with that they started towards Earth.

* * *

>Three-eight held on to the side as the Pelican entered Earth's atmosphere. He still felt a little bit guilty about leaving Scorch behind, but he knew it was for the best. If Scorch had come, something a lot more serious would have happened.<p><p>

"Hey." Three-eight turned to see a marine looking at him curiously. The tag on his chest read 'P. Adams'. "You're looking a little uptight there."

"Just a little bit," he replied, "Happens before every battle, especially when it's one I'm not used to."

"You have a point there," said Adams, and then smiled, "I'm sort of a rookie myself. This is only my second battle." Three-eight remembered his very first battle, the battle of Geonosis. He had been ready to go, and then the clone trooper that had come with him was pulled out of the gunship as they were landing. He had then realized how dangerous it was going to be. He wondered how he would feel if this marine was picked off before they landed. Adams, and every other marine, was different from the clone troopers he was used too. These marines had lived lives and had families. Three-eight then had a sudden determination to protect these marines.

"I'm sure you'll be fine," said three-eight. The marine was about to reply when they heard the Chief over the COM link, "You alright, three-eight?"

"I'm fine, just havin' a little chat," he replied, and then said, "How much longer?"

"About five minutes," Cortana said, "I'll let Sev know," and she turned off the COM link.

"Don't you have a name?" asked Adams, he had heard the whole conversation. Three-eight shrugged, "My squad calls me Boss sometimes, but mostly I go by three-eight."

"You're squad?"

"Yeah, I have three other people with me. We're called Delta Squad."

"Who's the other three?"

"Fixer, Sev, and Scorch," he replied.

"We're just about there!" called the pilot in the front. The pilot then turned on his COM link and asked, "Lookout, is it safe to land? I repeat, is it safe to land?" When there was no answer, the pilot look worried, "Lookout, are you there?" The pilot then looked out the windshield, "Oh no." The camp was completely engulfed in flames, and dead marines lay everywhere. Covenant were spread out among the camp and standing in the middle was a huge tank with four legs.

"A Scarab," Adams told three-eight.

"Hold on!" yelled the Sergeant that was with them. The Scarab turned its 'eye' toward the three Pelicans and charged its cannon. Three-eight braced himself; this wasn't going to end well. The Scarab fired a huge plasma beam and it nailed the Pelican. The last thing three-eight saw was a bright flash of light.

* * *

>When the Chief saw the Scarab hit three-eight's Pelican, he was instantly worried. What if he didn't make it? Fixer saw it too and he yelled, "No!" Sev's Pelican had been missed and flew over the Scarab, but the Chief had less luck. The Scarab shot at them with its plasma

turrets and it shot off the wing. They flew to the ground, flipped, and slid for about 50 yards before it crashed into the building.<p><p>

When the Chief woke up and he slowly opened his eyes.

"Wake up Chief," said Cortana, "We better get a move on." The Chief gave himself a little shake and stood up. Fixer was getting up a few feet away from him and the other marines and Johnson were getting up also.

"Is everyone alright?" asked the Chief.

"My ass hurts real badly, but I'm fine," replied Johnson. The marines grumbled agreement and took out their guns. The Chief and Fixer did the same, but the Chief noticed Fixer was using the Battle Rifle.

"Why aren't you using your DC?" asked the Chief.

"Almost out of ammo," he answered, and then said worryingly, "You think three-eight's okay?" The Chief really didn't know. If he had survived that, he definitely would be injured, and there was always a chance the Covenant would find them. _No_, he thought, _Stop thinking like that._

"Yes, I think he is." Fixer nodded and went to regroup with Johnson. That's when the Chief turned on his COM link and asked, "Three-eight? Three-eight, do you read me?" He didn't expect an answer and he didn't get one. He then tried Sev, "Sev, Sev are you there?"

"Read you loud and clear, Chief," replied Sev. The Chief breathed out a sigh of relief, "What's your status?"

"We landed safely and we're about to go to the rendezvous point, what about you?"

"We got a little tied in with the Scarab," replied the Chief, "But we're fine and heading to the rendezvous point also."

"Meet you there," said Sev, but then asked, "Heard from three-eight?"

"I haven't, but keep your COM link open, just in case."

"Copy that," replied Sev and he shut off the COM link. The Chief then jogged over to the others and listened to what they were going to do.

"We're heading to the rendezvous point then we'll decide what we're going to do once we get there," said Johnson.

"Sounds good," said the Chief, "But we better get moving before the Covenant come looking for us."

"Aye," said one of the marines.

"Okay," said Johnson, "Move out!"

* * *

>Author's note:** There you go, chapter 11. It's now 10:30 and I'm tired so I am going to bed. Just a reminder that I'm going to be gone June 14-17 so I'll try to get another chapter out by then, but don't count on it. Also, I have to say thank you to Yoshidude5371 for helping me proof my chapter, and apologize for hitting him in the face with a ball. And I've realized that I've stopped calling the Chief John, so if you want me to start calling him that again, tell me, if u don't care, tell me too. And I don't want anyone asking me if three-eight is dead or not, you'll find out soon enough. Please review!

12. Return of Others

Author's note: More replies

Delta-62 Scorch: Sorry, can't answer any of those except that Mace Windu is already dead. Also I have been known to be bad with cliffhangersâ€|

drunkenwerewolf: Hey, at least I admit it.

da candyman can: I know you didn't ask a question but I need to ask you one. What's with the mouse?

Okay, that's it, except PLEASE REVIEW! Some of you are STILL adding me to your favorites but not reviewing. REVIEW! Also sorry for such a long update, but to make it up I'm going to make the chapter long, and to thank Republic Chief and Yoshidude5371 for the idea for the end of this chapter, now on to it.

* * *

>Return of Others

Three-eight opened his eyes. He felt pain everywhere in his body, probably from the impact of hitting the ground. But what hurt the most was his arm, he couldn't move it. He struggled to look at it and he saw it was broken. He lay back down for a second and tried to figure out what to do. Three-eight figured it would be best to call for help, but when he tried to turn on his COM link all he got was static. _It must have short-circuited when the Pelican exploded,_ he thought.

Just then he heard the sound of a ship landing somewhere behind him. It could always be a ship from the UNSC, but he didn't want to take any chances. He tried to sit up but failed, then tried again and made it. A door opened on the ship and something walked out, something that wasn't human or alien. With a feeling of dread he turned around on his good arm. General Grievous was walking towards him, two of his lightsabers drawn, one blue and one purple.

Three-eight struggled to grab his DC that was lying beside him but Grievous kicked it away and held the blue lightsaber to his neck.

"Move again and I will kill you."

"So you're not killing me now?" asked three-eight in confusion.

"We have other uses," he replied, then put away his lightsabers and said, "Take him away, and the other live one." _Other live one?_ Thought three-eight, no one could have survived that fall. Just then, two MagnaGuards grabbed three-eight's arms and he tried not to cry out in pain. His broken arm was wrenched behind his back and cuffed with the other arm. In this position he could see all the dead marines that had ridden with him in the Pelican, and the other marine that had survived.

It was Private Adams.

Three-eight didn't have time to think about it, he was being dragged aboard the ship by the bodyguards and thrown roughly in the back. He had to grit his teeth to prevent himself from yelling. Adams was thrown beside him, unconscious. Three-eight observed him with a practiced eye and saw that his leg was broken, but other than that he was fine. But on the inside he could be internally bleeding.

Grievous followed the bodyguards into the ship and glanced briefly at three-eight, then said, "Go back to the base." The guards started the ship and took off from Earth. Three-eight already knew where they were going, and he knew they were in trouble.

* * *

>Sergeant Johnson led the way as they made their way to the rendezvous point. They hadn't encountered any Covenant parties, meaning either they assumed them dead, or they were still searching the Pelican. They were crossing an open field, which made the Chief nervous. The only cover was the forest on the other side of the field, which they were heading too.<p><p>

"Chief, two Phantoms heading towards your position!"

"Johnson! We've got company!" yelled the Chief, who was bringing up the rear with Fixer.

Johnson stopped, "Where?"

"Right behind us, they're coming with Phantoms." The Chief saw him mutter under his breath then he yelled, "Double time, marines!" They all sprinted, trying to make it to the forest. The Chief could have easily made it, but he stayed behind with the rest of them. While they were running, Fixer asked, "Phantom?"

"Covenant drop ship," he replied briefly. They continued running and no more than three seconds later the Phantoms appeared, and they were still 50 yards away from the forest. The Phantoms opened fire.

* * *

>When the ship landed, the two MagnaGuards and Grievous walked to the back of the ship where three-eight and Adams were.<p><p>

"Take them into the cells," said Grievous, "I will follow; we don't want to make the same mistake as last time. Then I will speak with my master." One guard grabbed three-eight while the other grabbed Adams. They then lead them off the ship, with a guard following behind

three-eight and the other dragging Adams and Grievous following close behind. _Damn, _thought three-eight, _how am I ever going to get out of this one?_

They walked down the hallways that were scorched from the battle that had happened only a day ago. When they reached the cells, the door was shut and Grievous had to punch a button to open it. When he did that, three-eight saw something he hadn't noticed before, "Your arm." Grievous looked up and narrowed his eyes, "Your new friend did that to me." He said nothing more, and three-eight and Adams were un-cuffed and thrown into the Covenant cell.

"Stay here," Grievous ordered his guards, "I will be back later." The bodyguards each took positions beside the cell and Grievous left, closing the door behind him. Just then, Adams started to wake up. Three-eight, holding his broken arm close to his stomach, crawled over to him.

"Stay down," said three-eight, "You've had it rough." Adams slowly blinked open his eyes, "Three-eight?" He nodded, "Yeah, it's me."

"Where are we?" he sat up and looked around, then groaned, "Were we captured by the Covenant?"

"Worse," replied three-eight.

"What could be worse than the Covenant?" he asked in confusion.

"Something from my time," he said bitterly, looking at the guards at their posts. Adams looked at them too and his eyes widened, "Are those robots?"

"No," said three-eight, "Droids, which are pretty much robots. But if you think their freaky, you should have seen what brought us in here."

"I don't wanna know," he replied, then tried to get up but gave a cry of pain as his broken leg twisted.

"Careful, your leg's broken."

"And so is your arm," he pointed out. Three-eight smiled under his helmet, "Well, we've each got a broken limb, I guess we're even."

Adams smiled too, "Yea, I guess. But I don't have anything to use to patch this up. Do you?" Three-eight did, and he pulled it out, "I've got some of this. I was saving it for an emergency, and I figure this is one, isn't it?" Adams looked at the blue fluid in the capsule and asked, "What is that?"

"Bacta," he replied, "Something once again from my time." Three-eight hooked on the needle and said to Adams, "I hope you're not afraid of shots." Without waiting for an answer, he injected the bacta into his leg, healing it.

Adams eyes widened in shock, "That's amazing," but then his face got grim, "But you shouldn't have wasted it on me, you should have used

it on yourself."

"You needed it more than I did," three-eight answered, "You couldn't walk, I could." Adams didn't reply, knowing three-eight was right, then suddenly asked, "Can I call you Boss? Because three-eight sounds sort of depressing, no offense or anything. Even the Chief doesn't go by his number; he goes by the Chiefâ€|obviously." He gave a little laugh. Three-eight smiled again, he was used to his squad mates only calling him Boss, but he could use some change, "Sure, go ahead."

"Thanks, Boss."

* * *

>As Grievous walked down the corridor, he couldn't think of why Darth Sidious wanted the commando alive. Just a day earlier, he was mad at him for not killing the commandoes. He shook his head to clear his thoughts, whatever his master was planning; it was for the good of the Empire.<p><p>

Just then a MagnaGuard came up to him and said, "General, we have an unidentified ship heading towards us. We don't know who it's from."

"Show me," the general replied and they headed to the control room. On the screen that had previously shown the space battle now showed a ship heading towards Jecovah. "No classification?" asked Grievous.

"No sir."

"Then I'll just have to meet it. You two," he pointed to two of the four guards that were there, "Come with me, you two stay here." They headed out the control room door and to the entrance. When they got there, Grievous asked, "Where is the ship landing?"

"This way, sir," a guard said and it led the way into a clump of forest. "It'll land here, sir." Grievous nodded and took cover in some bushes that were by there with his two bodyguards. Five minutes later, a ship landed in the clearing.

"Wait," said Grievous, though knowing they wouldn't attack unless he told them too. Just then, a door on the ship opened and a walkway spread out onto the ground. A person in green armor and an orange visor walked out, gun at the ready. Grievous narrowed his eyes; it was the one who had escaped with the commandoes.

He expected the commandoes to follow him out, but when they didn't, he knew it was a distraction.

"Tell the guards by the commando to watch out for a rescue attempt," he said to the guard.

"Yes, sir." Grievous then stood up and walked out of the bushes into the clearing, holding the handles of two of his lightsabers. The armored person turned his gun and aimed it at the general instantly.

"Drop your weapons," he said in an unmistakably female voice. There

was no way this was the one from earlier, it was a female. He decided to do another test, just to make sure she was new.

"You know I'm not going to drop my weapons," replied Grievous.

"Actually, I wouldn't," she replied, "I've never seen you before in my life."

"Then your not the one from earlier," said Grievous.

"Drop your weapons or I'll shoot," she said fiercely.

"That's going to be one of the worst mistakes of your life," he said, then activated his lightsabers and lunged. She was fast but not fast enough to get out of the way, he pinned her down to the ground with his foot and held a lightsaber to her throat. "Now I ask you to drop your weapon and to come with me quietly or I'll do to you what I did to your friend." She threw her gun to the side in defeat and Grievous let her up, still pointing his lightsaber toward her. She held her hands behind her head and one of the guards came and cuffed her wrists behind her with the same handcuffs they had used on the others earlier, what they didn't know was that the handcuffs were made with the same alloy that was used for the MagnaGuards staffs, which is why the commando and the other one hadn't been able to break it before.

"Don't make the same mistake you did last time," Grievous spat to the guard, "And conduct a search of the ship, make sure no one else is aboard." The guard then led the girl away toward the cells.

* * *

>When three-eight heard the guard speaking into the COM link, he instantly knew something was going on.<p><p>

"What's going on?" asked Adams.

"I don't know," replied three-eight, "But whatever it is, it's not good." Just then, the cell door opened and a guard came in leading someone that looked exactly like the Chief, but more feminine. They opened their door and threw her in with them, un-cuffing her. The one guard then left. She looked at three-eight and Adams then back to three-eight, "Who are you?"

"I was just about to ask you that," said three-eight. Adams could tell they were sizing each other up, and stayed out of the way.

"If you must know," she said, "My name's Kelly, now who are you."

"Delta three-eight," he said, "Or just three-eight."

"Don't you just have a name?" she asked. Three-eight then had to laugh. "I don't see what's funny," she said.

"It's nothing, but you just sound too much like the Chief," he replied. She then suddenly stiffened, "You know Chief?"

"Of course I do, if it wasn't for him I'd probably be dead by now.

But how do you know him?"

"We've known each other since we were both six," she said, "We trained together."

"Wait a second," three-eight interrupted, "Are you a Spartan?"

She nodded, "Yes, how did you know?"

"The Chief told me about you," he replied, "But he said you all died." Suddenly her shoulders fell, "He said everyone?" Three-eight nodded and she looked away. Then again, the door opened and a guard came in with another women, she looked like a scientist with her white lab coat. The bodyguard opened the cell and threw her in with them.

"Hello, Kelly," she said, breathing heavily.

"Dr. Halsey," replied Kelly, nodding. Dr. Halsey then looked around the cell and saw Adams and reading his nametag said, "Hello, Private Adams."

"Hello, Ma'am," he said, smiling. Dr. Halsey then looked at three-eight.

"I've never seen you before, are you part of the Marines? Because you sure do look like it."

"You could say that, ma'am," said three-eight, "But I've only been a part of it for about a day." Dr. Halsey narrowed her eyes in confusion, "Then where are you from?"

"You'd never guess," said three-eight.

"He's from the past," Adams blurted out.

"You are?" asked Kelly in amazement.

"Yes, I am."

"Take off you helmet," said Dr. Halsey, "So I can tell if your telling the truth."

"All right," said three-eight, then he unsealed his helmet and took it off. Underneath was an exact copy of Jango Fett's head, of course no one in the cell knew that except for him. Dr. Halsey looked at him, and then said, "You're not lying, but what's your name?"

"Three-eight."

"No name?" asked Dr. Halsey.

"No, ma'am."

"Now you sound like John, always wanting to go by rank and number, not that he has a choice," she added as an afterthought.

"John?" asked three-eight in confusion, "Who's that?"

"So the Chief didn't tell you his real name?" asked Kelly, "Didn't think so, he never does."

"So the Chief's real name is John," said three-eight, "Never would have guessed." Once more the cell door opened, but instead of a guard with a prisoner, General Grievous came in.

"Commando, you're coming with me, and no tricks this time," he said, "Or you will be dead." Three-eight quickly grabbed the helmet and put it back on before the guards grabbed him and cuffed him again, sending a shot of pain run up his broken arm. Once they left, Adams said, "I hope they don't do anything bad to him."

"Who is that thing that took him away?" asked Kelly.

"I don't know," replied Adams, "He's from three-eight's time though."

"Where is he from though," asked Dr. Halsey.

"I don't know, all I've heard is that he and three others from his squad came from the past and that they helped the Chief escape from the Covenant."

"Escape?"

"Yeah, the Chief was captured by the Covenant, and so was Sergeant Johnson, I don't know if you know him though, ma'am."

"Yes, we do," said Dr. Halsey, "He was with us when we escaped from Reach."

"Is it true though?" asked Kelly, "That all the other Spartans are dead?" Adams face fell, "Yes, it is. Their ship was attacked by the Covenant on their way to Cairo Station. Only the Chief, Johnson, and Cortana made it." The room fell silent in mourn for the Spartans. The whole project had started off with 75 children, now there were only two left.

"But we better find a way out of here or we're all dead," said Kelly.

* * *

>Three-eight walked in front of Grievous, trying to hide the fact that his arm was broken, but he figured it out anyway, "I know your arm is broken, commando. You can stop trying to hide it." Three-eight silently swore and let his arm hang at an angle. He was just wondering where they were going when they entered the room with the time portal.<p><p>

"Are we going back," asked three-eight casually.

"No need for that, my master has come here to have a little talk with you." Three-eight immediately knew what 'talk' meant and he replied fiercely, "I won't tell you anything."

"We'll see about that," said a voice in the shadows. Three-eight was forced on his knees by Grievous then the General himself knelt and bowed his head.

"You have caused a lot of trouble for us, commando," said the voice again, "But now it's time for you to help us."

"I'll never help you with anything, Sidious," answered three-eight solidly.

"So you know who I am," Darth Sidious walked out from the shadows, with his hood hanging over his head, "Well, then you should know what this meeting is about." Three-eight didn't answer, he knew they were going to interrogate him and he was bracing himself. About what, he didn't know, but he was not going to tell them anything.

Then out of nowhere, Sidious raised his arms and Grievous leaped out of the way. Before three-eight could do anything, Sidious unleashed a wave of force lightning onto him.

****Author's note:**** Yes, it's also the return of the cliffhangers. Don't worry; I won't be as bad as last time. And red ninja, don't worry either, you'll be getting your Hog' scene soon enough.

13. Assault

****Author's note:**** More replies (No way!)

TheAmazingTecnocolorRingWraith: He's coming into this chapter, don't worry.

Commander: You know enough to make your own fanfic, you should try it.

drunkenwerewolf: I don't know about Spectres but we'll definitely have a Helljumper scene in here.

Master117: Yeah, I've read all the Halo books. But what do you mean by MasterChief117923?

Easy-Company: That could be your own fanfic.

InjuredPelican: That's okay, but I know Grievous is a cyborg, that's why he kicks so much ass. And about them not trying to figure out what their guns are made up of, they're doing that because 1) They're using them right now and 2) They're in a completely different galaxy, they wouldn't have the materials to make new ones. And Sidious appeared so fast because I was trying to surprise you guys.

GS the Cat: Okay, if you think it's so bad why did you read it? And I have never written like that and I probably never will.

Okay, I give up with the reviews, do whatever you want. But I WOULD appreciate it if you did review, and I have people on Red vs. Blue who read my story too (Yes Killer and Dingo I mean you) so I don't care. As long as you read my story! And sorry for the long update! I really am! I'll try to get the next one out sooner. That's it, here's the chapter.

* * *

>Assault

The Chief and the others kept sprinting towards the forest while the Phantoms were firing at them with their plasma turrets. One marine was hit and he fell, screaming. The Phantoms continued to fire when they landed, dropping off more Covenant troops. The Chief knew there was no way they were going to make it to the forest before the Covenant reached them. Then, out of the forest, someone yelled, "Hit the dirt!" Everyone dove to the ground as bullets flew over their heads, hitting the Covenant on their heels.

The Chief took out his gun to help them finish off the rest of the Covenant, and then all of them got up and ran the rest of the way into the trees. Standing there was Sev and the rest of the marines that were in his Pelican.

"Thought you might need some help, Chief," he said.

"Glad you showed up," said Johnson, panting, "Or we all would've been deep fried."

"We better get moving though," said the Chief, "They'll be sending more troops after us." Sev nodded and took the rear with the Chief as Fixer got in front with Johnson with the marines in the middle.

"Any word from three-eight?" asked Sev. The Chief shook his head, "Not yet." Sev sighed, "This isn't like him, usually he's back on his feet by now and telling us what to do, something happened."

"Maybe his COM link just short-circuited," replied the Chief.

"I doubt it." They continued on in silence towards the rendezvous point, looking out for more Covenant. When they arrived there, there were already a few marines that had set up a camp, and waving at them was Scorch. Johnson and the marines went to help with the camp while the Chief, Sev, and Fixer went over to Scorch.

"Finally you guys show up," he said, then asked with a hint of worry in his voice, "Where's Boss?"

"We don't know," said the Chief sadly, "His Pelican was shot down by the Covenant and we haven't heard from him since."

"He didn't even make it planet side?" asked Scorch, "That doesn't sound like him."

"That's what I said," replied Sev.

"Wherever he's at, I hope he's okay," said Fixer.

"Chief!" yelled Johnson, "Get over here! We need you!" The Chief jogged over to him while the others waited.

"What is it?" asked the Chief.

"We're trying to figure out the best way to get rid of these bastards," he said.

"What do we got?"

"Well, we can go in and try to exterminate 'em one by one."

"Or?"

"Or, we could bring in the artillery and blow the living shit out of them, but that would endanger the city." The Chief thought for a second, then got an idea, "How about we use both."

Johnson looked at the Metropolis blueprint then back to him, "How we gonna do that?"

"We could go and take out as much Covenant as we can, like you said," replied the Chief, "But we can evacuate the city while we're there. Then we can hit them with the artillery."

The Sergeant was silent then grinned and said, "Sounds like a plan."

* * *

>Three-eight lay on the ground as Sidious finished using the force lightning. He was panting; he'd never experience anything like that before. Grievous stood in the shadow by the wall, and three-eight knew if he was allowed to, he'd be laughing.<p><p>

"So, commando, now that you have experienced the true power of the Sith, are you ready to answer some questions?" Three-eight didn't answer and he was hit with another bolt of force lightning. He tried to take it, to not show weakness, but he couldn't help it. He started to yell in pain. Sidious kept at it for a few more seconds then he dropped his hands and three-eight stopped yelling.

"Now, I ask you again, are you ready to answer some questions?"

"I'll never. Tell you. Anything." he managed to say.

"You are stubborn," replied Sidious, "But I know something that will loosen your tongue." He then held up a hologram of the rest of Delta Squad.

"You're a liar," said three-eight, "They're. Not even here. And Grievous. Obviously can't catch them." Grievous narrowed his eyes and took a step forward, but Sidious held up a hand.

"I caught you, clone," Grievous said fiercely, "Don't think that I can't get them too." Three-eight managed to get up on his knees and stare at Sidious to show he wasn't afraid but on the inside he was. Afraid that Sidious would get a hold of his squad and do something to them.

The room was silent for a moment the Sidious ordered, "Return him to the cell, we'll have another talk later." Sidious grinned as Grievous grabbed three-eight's broken arm and roughly threw him in front of him, leading him back to the cell.

* * *

>The Chief led the others to two warthogs that were parked in the

camp.<p><p>

"What are those?" asked Scorch.

"Warthogs," said Johnson who had caught up with them, "We're takin' these babies into Metropolis to mow down the Covenant."

"They go fast?" asked Sev.

"You bet."

"Then let's get going!"

"Okay, Sev, Scorch, you guys come with me. Fixer, you can go with Johnson and the Helljumper."

"Helljumper?" asked Fixer.

"You'll meet him soon enough, but I'm driving," replied Johnson, "Who knows where we would end up with you two driving."

The Chief, Sev, and Scorch made their way towards their warthog.

"I better drive," said the Chief.

"Fine by me," said Scorch, "I have no clue how to drive these things." Sev jumped onto the back where the machine gun was, "I can really score some kills with this thing."

"We'll see about that," replied Scorch, climbing into the passenger's seat.

"You ready?" the Chief asked Johnson over the COM link.

"Yeah, let's move out!" The Chief put the Warthog into drive and took off with Johnson close behind him.

* * *

>When three-eight was led back into the cell, Grievous un-cuffed him and threw him to the cell floor. Kelly immediately was up and by three-eight's side, but Adams and Dr. Halsey were sleeping.<p><p>

"You'll regret what you said, clone," said Grievous in a threatening tone then left.

Kelly waited until the door shut then asked, "What'd he mean by that?"

"Nothing," said three-eight, struggling to sit up on his good arm. Kelly helped him get up and said, "We're on the same team. You can tell me, you know." Three-eight sighed, and then replied, "I said something to him to piss him off, and I guess now he's going to prove me wrong, which is bad."

"What'd you say?"

"He and this other guy threatened my squad and I said that he couldn't catch them, and he's going to try and prove me wrong

now."

Kelly was silent for a moment then said, "I doubt he will, sounded like an empty threat to me."

"But you don't know Grievous as well as I do. He followed me and my squad all the way here; I doubt he'll be giving up now." By then, Adams and the Doctor had woken up and Adams asked, "Boss! Are you alright?"

"Yes, I'm fine," he replied, "Just need some rest."

"But first," said Dr. Halsey, "I need to ask you some questions."

"Please, ma'am," said three-eight, "I've already been interrogated once today, just let me rest first." Dr. Halsey just looked at him, and remained silent. She thought about it and then said, "Alright, but be ready when you wake up." Three-eight nodded, took off his helmet, laid against the wall and fell asleep.

* * *

>The Chief and the others drove into Metropolis at high speed, surprising the Covenant on guard. Sev and the Helljumper shot down Covenant with the machine guns while Scorch and Fixer took them out from the passenger's seat.<p><p>

"Eat lead you bastards!" yelled the Helljumper as he shot down a few Grunts.

"Hey Chief!" said Scorch, "Ram that car!" The Chief did and the roar of the Elite that was hiding behind it could barely be heard over the explosion the car made.

"Move out!" yelled Johnson, "We got more Covenant to kill!"

They headed deeper into the city and more and more Covenant patrols met them. When they reached the city center, they found a Wraith and six Ghosts waiting for them. The Chief turned right as Johnson went left, and three Ghosts went after each.

"Come out of that vehicle and fight me face-to-face, Demon!" an elite yelled at the Chief, but Sev turned his gun towards him and opened fire. Seconds later, the elite lay dead and the Ghost blown up.

"Nice shot," said the Chief, and then swerved to dodge a huge ball of plasma that was shot from the Wraith.

"Chief!" Johnson yelled over the COM link, "We need to take that Wraith out!"

"Take out the Ghosts first!" replied the Chief, "Then we can go after the Wraith!"

"Copy that!" Johnson did a U-turn and rammed the Ghost that was chasing him. Sev shot the other Ghost that was shooting them from behind and it was blown up but only to be replaced by the other one.

"Hey Scorch," said Sev, "How many kills you got?"

Scorch didn't answer but primed a plasma grenade and hit one of the Ghosts with it.

"Ha! Sev beat that!"

"Johnson, are you ready?" asked the Chief. Just as he asked that, the Helljumper finished off the last Ghost and Johnson replied, "Ready!"

"Let's take that Wraith out." The Chief turned and approached the Wraith from the front with Johnson, with Sev and the Helljumper opening fire. At the last second the Wraith boosted. Johnson swerved to the right, the Wraith barely missing him but as the Chief turned, the Wraith clipped the end of the Warthog and he spun out of control. He slammed the brakes and he stopped, but realized how much of a mistake that was.

The Wraith shot a ball of plasma at them, hitting the spot beside the Warthog, making it blow up and sending them flying. This though gave Johnson a free shot and he shouted, "Open up!" The Helljumper didn't waste a second and fired at the Wraith. The distracted Wraith didn't have time to turn around and was soon destroyed by the machine gun. Johnson didn't waste time celebrating as he drove over to the destroyed Warthog.

"Cover us!" Johnson yelled to the Helljumper as he and Fixer got out to help the others. The Chief was already getting up, Sev was sitting up and Scorch was holding his head lying on his back.

"Everyone alright?" asked Fixer.

"I would've said that was awesome except the landing wasn't the prettiest thing," replied Scorch.

"You really think so?" asked Sev sarcastically as he leaned on one knee.

"Sir!" yelled the Helljumper, "Something just moved over there!"

"Is it hostile?" asked Johnson. The Helljumper was silent for a moment, "Can't tell."

"Remember you're training, soldier!" Johnson replied, "Don you think we'd have people on our side crawling over the tank we just blew up? Shoot it!" The Helljumper responded and started to shoot the shadow that was on the tank. But as he shot it the one shadow became two and a moment later the Chief saw a grenade thrown at the Warthog.

"Get out of there!" yelled the Chief and the Helljumper dove just in time as the grenade went off, blowing up the Warthog.

"That was a thermal detonator," said Fixer in disbelief. As soon as he finished the sentence two MagnaGuards jumped out of the wreckage, holding their staffs. Everyone was now on their feet, guns out and pointed at the Guards.

"You don't usually act without Grievous," said Fixer, "Where is

he?"

"He's guarding the prisoners," replied one of the Guards, "And you'll be there soon, too."

The Chief knew what he meant by that a moment before Scorch did, as he was charging at the Guard. The Chief caught him by the shoulder and Scorch shouted, "You let Boss go or you'll regret it!"

"Boss?" asked the droid, "I don't know who you're talking about, we have four prisoners in there. You could be talking about the clone."

"Four?" asked Fixer, "How do you already have four prisoners?"

"One came with the clone," the Guard answered, "And the other two landed by our base."

"Who are they?" asked the Chief, still aiming his gun at them with one hand and holding Scorch with the other.

"I don't know who they are but one looks like him," and the other Guard pointed at Johnson with his staff.

"You leave my marines' outta this!" yelled Johnson, but the Guard ignored him and continued.

"One has a white lab coat on and the other looks like him," and he pointed at the Chief. Everyone looked at the Chief, but he wasn't paying any attention. He was frozen and his eyes wide with shock beneath his helmet. He knew who the two latter of them were.

Dr. Halsey and Kelly.

How they ended up there he had no clue, last time he had heard anything of them was when Dr. Halsey took Kelly aboard the ship and left to do an experiment with Kelly. How they had ended up at Jecovah he had no clue, but he suddenly felt a sudden urge to get them all out, now that they knew where to find them.

The Chief snapped out of it and brought his gun up, "Thanks for the info." He then started to fire and everyone else joined him. The Guards were caught off guard but that only lasted a moment. They lunged at the soldiers, activating their electrostaffs.

* * *

>Author's note:** Yes, a VERY long update. But I had the worst writers block and when I did write something down, my computer froze and I lost everything I wrote. THREE TIMES. So here it finally is and I hope you enjoyed it. Next one will be out sooner.

14. A New Squad

Author's note: You know what's coming.

InjuredPelican: You'll see why they were doing there, just be patient.

lightman: You've got a point, but I already changed it. Thanks for the heads up!

TigerTank: Okay, I read your review and I realized everything you said was true. I'll try to work on those things and thanks for helping.

Shawn: Maybe, maybe not, just got to keep reading.

Wow, I noticed how many good reviews I got from the last chapter and I just want to thank you guys. If it wasn't for your reviews I would've quit this story a long time ago. Your reviews even helped me find a way to make a sequel to this story. Yes, I am going to make a sequel and no I'm not going to tell you what it's about yet (I kind of don't know myself.) But I just want some votes, should I keep working on Now or Never (my other fanfic I put on hold for this one) or should I go ahead and write the sequel? I'll listen to what you guys will say.

* * *

>A New Squad**

When three-eight woke up, he could tell immediately something was wrong. Everyone in the room was staring at the door that led to the cell and everyone was silent.

"What's wrong?" asked three-eight. They turned to him, startled, not knowing that he was up.

"Something's up," replied Kelly, "Listen." Three-eight sat up and listened, and what he heard sent a chill up his spine. There was the sound of marching, and things rolling.

It was the sound of the droid army.

"That's impossible," three-eight whispered.

"What is?" asked Adams, but he ignored him and got closer to the door to listen. Suddenly the door opened and two droidekas rolled in. Three-eight leaped back and stood ready to fight. Kelly got up beside him and put Adams and Dr. Halsey behind them. The droidekas unfurled themselves from their ball position and stood on their tripod legs, their two blaster arms pointed at the four.

When they didn't fire, three-eight relaxed a little bit but didn't let his guard down. That's when two super battle droids, or SBDs, marched in behind the droidekas, their arms against their chest in a non-attack position.

"We're moving," said one of the SBDs, "Come with us, now." Three-eight hesitated, he didn't know how these droids got here or why Grievous's guards weren't doing the moving, but he knew he had no choice. He walked in between the waiting droids with the others following his lead.

When they walked out into the corridor, four more SBDs were waiting for them. They formed a circle around the prisoners, with the droidekas following behind. They walked down the hallway for 10

minutes when three-eight noticed a door farther down. He then got an idea, an idea that might help them get out of this situation.

"On my mark, take out these two lead droids," he whispered to Kelly, who was walking beside him.

"Are you crazy?" she whispered back, "By the time we do that, we'll be killed."

"I know this things way better than you," he said, "By the time we've done that and get out of here they wouldn't have even fired, and their aiming isn't the best." He paused for a second, thinking one of the droids had heard him. When it didn't do anything, he continued, "See that door? We could run in there and take cover; do you know how to lock these doors?"

"Yes," she replied. She remained silent for a second, and then said with a resigning sigh, "That's the best chance we got, alright on your mark." Three-eight nodded then waited a moment. They were lucky that they hadn't handcuffed them. He waited a few more seconds, then without hesitating yelled, "Mark!"

Both him and Kelly lunged forward and punched the lead SBDs. Their fists went through their armor and into their wiring, short-circuiting them. They fell forward, but before they even hit the ground three-eight had grabbed Adams and Kelly grabbed Dr. Halsey saying, "Sorry, ma'am." They leaped over the dead SBDs and made a break for the door. They were halfway there when the droids finally started shooting, and the droidekas started to stand up in their tripod stance.

Their shields took the shots up until when they reached the door, when they ran out. The door opened automatically when they reached it and they all dove in. Kelly put Dr. Halsey down and she sprinted back to the console by the door, hacking it. A few moments later the door shut and it turned red to show it was locked. They stood there, waiting, until they heard blaster fire hitting the door. They all dove for cover but when the door held, they got back up.

"Uh, guys," said Adams, "I think luck might be on out side." They looked at him and what they saw gave three-eight hope that they could actually get out of here.

Weapons upon weapons lined the wall and were stacked up on the floor, with ammo piled onto shelves. Not only were there covenant weapons, but there were human ones as well.

"We just locked ourselves into an armory," said Dr. Halsey in awe.

"Did you plan this?" asked Kelly, turning to three-eight,

"No," he replied, surprised as everyone else in the room, "I hadn't the slightest idea."

"Well, finder's keepers," said Adams, grabbing a Shotgun. Kelly and three-eight moved forward and grabbed their pick of weapons. Three-eight stopped still when his left arm started hurting him, his broken one. He probably hadn't felt it during battle because of the adrenaline. Kelly looked at him and asked, "That escape took a lot

out of your arm didn't it?"

"Oh," three-eight responded, continuing forward, "I've still got a lot left."

They chose their weapons, Kelly picking out a Battle Rifle and a SMG, three-eight picking up a Shotgun and a Battle Rifle. Dr. Halsey picked up a Magnum to defend herself. Kelly eyed the Sniper and murmured sadly, "Linda would've used that." Three-eight didn't reply, not knowing who Linda was but figured she was a Spartan along with the Chief and Kelly.

"I think it's time to take out those droids," said Adams, tossing a grenade up and down.

"Let's do it," said three-eight.

* * *

>The Chief dove to the side as a MagnaGuard lunged at him, his staff whirring as it was activated. He wasn't fast enough and the Guard caught him in the back. Fixer shot the Guard, who was advancing on the Chief. It didn't flinch at all from the shot and was on Fixer in a second, hitting him over the head. He fell backwards but before the Guard could make his move, Sev leaped in and hit him from behind. The Guard stumbled but caught his balance. He whipped around but the Chief and Sev were ready and opened fire. The Guard wasn't able to defend itself in the onslaught on bullets. It fell over and lay still. <p>Fixer, who was closest, got up and slowly walked over to the Guard.<p>

"Is it dead?" asked Sev, "If not, let me add a few more bullets." Fixer reached him and jabbed him with his foot. When it didn't respond he said, "Dead." But as Fixer turned to help the others with the other Guard it leaped up and wrapped its arm around his neck, holding him in front of him as a human shield. The Chief and Sev immediately had their Battle Rifles at the ready, but didn't shoot afraid that they would hit Fixer.

The other MagnaGuard leaped from its fight with Scorch, Johnson, and the Helljumper and landed beside the Guard and his hostage.

"No!" yelled Scorch as he saw Fixer and without the Chief to hold him back this time, he ran forward.

"Scorch, don't!" yelled Fixer, but before anybody could do anything, Grievous leaped out of his hiding place and landed right in Scorch's path. He leaped back out of Grievous's range and joined back up with the others.

"You're not supposed to be here," said Sev, "Your guards said you were guarding the prisoners."

"And you thought their information was reliable?" he replied, "You have a lot to learn clone. But, of course, their information on the prisoners was true."

"So you do have Boss!" yelled Scorch.

"Yes, and we plan on taking the rest of your pitiful squad too," he

then turned quickly to his guards and muttered, "Take him away, and don't wait for me." With that, he leapt forward, three lightsabers in his remaining three hands.

As everyone was distracted by Grievous, the two MagnaGuards dragged the struggling Fixer toward the Phantom they had come in on. As soon as the three of them were in the ship, the Gravity Lift shut down and the ship took off towards Jecovah.

"We can't win here!" yelled Johnson over the COM link, "Chief we've got to bail!" The Chief knew he was right, he could tell Grievous wasn't even trying, and since Fixer was already captured there was nothing they could do.

"Retreat! Find cover!" yelled the Chief to everyone. They started to run, firing over their shoulders. To their surprise Grievous did not pursue. Instead he deactivated his lightsabers and watched them run.

"Run while you can," muttered Grievous, "You won't be able to hide."

* * *

>It was nighttime on Kashyyyk when two clone commandoes made their way down into a valley, Blaster Rifles raised. They kept silent until one asked, "Niner, are you sure this is the last place Delta Squad was?" <p>"Yes, Dar," the other replied, "General Kenobi said that General Windu came out here looking for them, but he hasn't heard from him or Delta Squad since." They fell silent again, keeping a lookout for enemies when the first commando asked, "You think they're dead?" The other didn't answer for a moment, and then said in a solemn voice, "I don't know, Dar."<p>

Omega three-six, Darman, turned around to make sure there wasn't anyone sneaking up on them, and then said over the COM link, "Fi, Atin, you still got our backs?"

The first to reply was Omega one-five, Fi, who was positioned on one side of the valley "Course we do, you expecting us to fall asleep on the job?"

"Wouldn't put it past you," said Omega two-two, Atin, from the other side.

"I might," he replied, "We haven't had one bit of action yet."

"Which is a good thing," said Omega oh-nine, Niner, who was also the Sergeant of the squad, "At least it looks like Delta Squad got their mission done, I haven't seen one hostile yet."

"They get the job done," said Darman, "Trust me; I've worked with them before."

As Darman was talking he wasn't paying attention to where he was going and he tripped over something.

"Ah!" he yelled.

"Dar!" said Niner, running over to him, "You alright?"

"Yea, just tripped," he replied, then when he shined his light on what he tripped on, he let out a cry of surprise.

"General Windu!"

Mace Windu was laying on the ground spread eagle with his eyes open in surprise. Niner didn't have to feel his pulse to know that he was dead. He knelt down and went to retrieve his lightsaber when he noticed that it was gone.

"Where's his lightsaber?" asked Niner. Darman looked up,

"It's not here?"

"No," said Niner, getting up and looking around, "I don't see it anywhere."

"Maybe it flew somewhere when he was killed," replied Darman, turning on his head light and scanned the valley wall. That's when he saw something really strange.

"What theâ€¦?" he said, passing his light over a certain spot several times.

"What is it?" asked Niner.

"Watch this," he said, and he passed over the spot with his light again, but when he did the spot didn't light up, it stayed pitch black.

"Strange," said Niner, walking cautiously up to it with his gun raised. He took a shot at it, expecting it to hit the wall, but instead went right through it.

"You find anything?" asked Fi over the COM link.

"Yea," responded Darman, "General Windu."

"What?" asked Atin in surprise who was listening to the conversation, "Is he okay?"

"No," Darman said gravely, "He's dead."

"But, how?" asked Fi.

"Haven't checked yet," said Darman, who had forgotten to in his surprise at finding him, then added, "Careful, Niner, you don't know what that is." Niner was now only a foot away from the shadow, which was a perfect rectangle.

"We should probably contact General Kenobi to pass on the news," said Niner. He then moved back from the shadow and walked over to Darman.

"Fi, Atin, I want you two down here, something's going on and I want us together."

"Heading down now," said Atin.

"Same here," replied Fi. Niner then turned on his COM link and said,

"General Kenobi, this is Niner. Come in."

"I read you," answered Obi-Wan Kenobi on the other side of the COM link, "Have you found something?"

"Yes, sir. I'm sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but we have found General Windu. He's dead." There was a long silence on the other end, and then Obi-Wan murmured, "I can't believe it."

"I'm sorry, sir," replied Niner.

"Do you know how he was killed?" asked Obi-Wan.

"Just a second, sir," he answered then said to Darman, "You know what killed him yet?"

"Sarge," said Darman, "It was a lightsaber."

"What?" asked Niner, surprised. All the Jedi had been killed at the temple, not counting Obi-Wan and Yoda, but who would've tracked Mace all the way out here?

Then he remembered Obi-Wan was waiting for him and he replied, "It was a lightsaber, sir."

"Are you sure?" asked Obi-Wan in surprise. Niner knew he was thinking the same thing he was.

"Positive," he replied.

"Well," Niner knew he was trying to hide the grief from his voice, but he could still hear it, "If you find Delta Squad or anything else weird report in."

"Sir, we have found something a little strange."

"What is it?" asked Obi-Wan.

"It's a door way type thing," said Niner, "But when you shine a light on it, it remains pitch black."

"How odd," said Obi-Wan.

"We'll check it out, sir," said Niner.

"Careful," Obi-Wan said cautiously, "You don't know what's in there."

"We will," he replied, "Niner out." He then shut off the COM link. Just as he did, Atin and Fi were climbing down into the valley.

"What did you guys find?" asked Fi.

"Well, General Windu as you already know," said Niner, gesturing sadly to the fallen Jedi.

"And this," said Darman, standing up and shining the light on the shadow.

"What?" asked Fi, but then Atin said, "How is it doing that?"

"What?" asked Fi again, "I don't see anything."

"That's the point," said Darman.

"Oh," said Fi, "I knew that."

"But watch this," said Niner, aiming his blaster rifle at the shadow and shot it once again, and again it went right through it.

"Ok, now I really see it," said Fi.

Niner walked up to it, and stuck his hand about two inches from it.

"Niner, don't!" said Atin, "You don't know what will happen!"

"That's why I'm doing it," said Niner, and then thrust his hand into it.

It all happened in one swift motion.

The time portal pulled him through and the others tried to grab him, but it was too late. When he came out he landed on his side, his shields completely gone, in what looked like to be a throne room. He looked up and what he saw made his stomach drop.

Ten SBDs.

* * *

>Author's note: Bet you weren't expecting that! I know if you've read Hard Contact that those aren't the correct numbers for Darman and those guys but I had to cut them short so they matched Delta Squads. And yeah a little on the short side but at least I updated faster! But, hope you like it.

15. Halo

****Author's note:**** Replies to questions.

Shadow: Yeah, he for sure will.

InjuredPelican: I'm using the droid army because the clones are being used in the Star Wars universe, so instead of the droids being shut down permanently, they'll be used in the Halo universe.

Demonwithasoul: I know that at the end of First Strike that they are not dead but I changed it so that they are. I have nothing against them, but it's just too much to have two squads and five Spartans, so I had to kill some of them off. And nobody, and I mean nobody, will

kick Grievous's ass in this story.

I've noticed that a lot of the stories on my favorites list haven't updated in a while, I think most of them quit. But a few have updated lately, and I thank them for that. I'll give you my word that I won't quit on this story, and talking about not quitting, the votes so far have been three for me to make the sequel and none for Now or Never. If you missed it I'm taking votes for if I should make the sequel to this first or finish Now or Never, my other fanfic. Other than that, thank you for reviewing and here's the chapter.

* * *

>Halo

When Niner looked up and saw the SBDs standing there, he immediately switched his DC from rifle to anti-armor attachment and fired a round at the closest SBD. It exploded and also the two unfortunate enough to be standing beside it lost their armor plating on the front of them. By then the rest had noticed that he was there and raised their blaster arms into firing position. Before they could fire he shot four more anti-armor rounds, taking out six more SBDs. But then he was in a much more critical position than before.

He was out of ammo.

Niner switched back to his rifle and began to open fire, but it wasn't enough to keep the remaining three SBDs at bay. They returned fire instantly and Niner was caught in an onslaught of blaster fire. His shields for only a few seconds then he began taking fire into his armor. He kept returning fire until he couldn't take the pain anymore and he fell backwards, yelling.

Just then he heard a strange noise and the blaster fire was directed in a different direction. Niner tried to sit up and he caught a brief glimpse of the rest of his squad fighting the SBDs, then he fell back and slipped into unconsciousness.

* * *

>Three-eight was waiting tensely for Kelly to open the door, ready to throw the grenade. Adams was beside him, also holding a grenade while Kelly was on the other side by the console, ready to activate it. Dr. Halsey was hiding behind a box with a pistol, letting the soldiers do their work.<p><p>

But what they didn't know was at that same time, the two MagnaGuards had just landed with Fixer and led him out handcuffed, heading down the same hallway where three-eight and the rest of them had locked themselves into the armory.

"What's going on?" asked one of the Guards, motioning for the remaining Guard and Fixer to stay back. The Guard walked to the one of the droids and asked again, "What are you doing?"

"Sir, the prisoners areâ€|"

But before it could finish its sentence, the door sprang open and three grenades flew out. As soon as they hit the floor at the droids feet they exploded, taking the SBDs, the droidekas, and the

MagnaGuard with it. After the smoke cleared, the remaining parts of the droids lay strewn across the floor.

"What, a MagnaGuard?" asked three-eight, "That can't be good."

"Boss, look out!" yelled Fixer, surprising three-eight.

"Fixer!" he yelled before he was bowled over by the remaining Guard. Just then, Kelly and Adams ran out, Kelly with a Battle Rifle and Adams a Shotgun, and helped get the Guard off of three-eight. As the guard leaped, Adams caught him in the stomach with a blast from his Shotgun, throwing him off balance. The Guard got up to leap again and was kicked in the head by Fixer, and then was under fire from three-eights and Kelly's Battle Rifles, with Adams coming in with his Shotgun.

The Guard, already weakened before by the Chief and Sev, took the hits and fell dead. Just in case though Adams came up and hit him with three blasts of his Shotgun.

"I think he's dead," said Adams, reloading his Shotgun. Three-eight rummaged through the bodyguard until he found what he was looking for, the key to Fixers handcuffs. He brought it over to Fixer and slid the key in and a second later the handcuffs fell to the floor.

"Thanks," said Fixer, and then asked, "How did you escape?"

"This droids are so stupid, they couldn't keep us in order," said Adams, kicking a SBD on the floor.

"What happened to you, though," asked three-eight.

"These guards," said Fixer, "And Grievous, that's what happened. We were attacked by a Covenant tank but we managed to destroy it, but then Grievous's guards ambushed us and caught me. That's when Grievous showed up, and the last thing I knew was that Grievous was fighting the others."

Three-eight nodded, "We're not out of here yet, so we will worry about what happened to them later," and then he said to Fixer, "How did you get here?"

"By a ship, I think Covenant by the looks of it."

"Do you remember the way out?" asked three-eight.

"Yeah, I can lead the way," replied Fixer, catching on to the plan, and then said, "Someone will need to drive it though."

"I can," answered Kelly.

"I can too," said Dr. Halsey, who had come out of her hiding spot to listen to the conversation.

"I might be able to help," said Adams, "A little."

"Then let's head that way andâ€¦" then three-eight stopped as he heard something.

"What?" whispered Fixer and three-eight held up a finger. It was very, very faint but he could barely make out what it was.

It was blaster bolts being fired.

And was that DC rifles returning fire?

"Do you hear that?" asked three-eight.

"Yes," said Kelly "Sounds like the weapons the SBDs were using."

Dr. Halsey and Adams, who couldn't hear the sounds, just waited for an answer.

"You think the others are already coming for us?" asked Fixer.

"If they were fighting Grievous like you said," answered three-eight, "I doubt it. It has to be someone else."

"We should check it out," said Kelly.

Three-eight nodded, "Kelly and I will go. Fixer, you take Adams and Dr. Halsey to the ship. If we're not back in forty-five minutes, leave without us."

Fixer nodded and then said to Adams and Dr. Halsey, "Let's go," then he lead the way back down the hallway.

Three-eight and Kelly then pulled out their Battle Rifles and headed toward the sound of the blaster fire. It took them about five minutes to navigate the hallways and when they repeatedly went through the doors where Grievous had cut through them, three-eight knew where they were heading a moment before they reached it. The blaster fire was a lot louder now, three-eight knowing for sure that it was coming from the Prophet's chambers.

"On three," said three-eight.

"One," he started.

"Two," Kelly continued.

"Three!" yelled three-eight and they charged through the door. What they saw made three-eight stop dead.

Inside a squad of commandoes were fighting three SBDs, one of the squad was unconscious in the corner while the other three fought the droids. Three-eight knew they needed help and he was ready to give it to them. He nodded to Kelly, raised his Battle Rifle, and charged at the droids, firing. Kelly followed his lead and fired her own Battle Rifle. Soon, one SBD lay dead with the other two following it closely. When all they had all been killed, two of the commandoes ran over to the fallen one to help him while the remaining one walked over to three-eight.

"Thanks for the help, Boss," said the commando.

"Darman?" asked three-eight in disbelief.

"You bet," Darman replied.

"But, I'd thought you were killed," replied three-eight.

He shrugged, "If you mean my old squad, yes. I was the sole survivor of my squad on the mission at Geonosis, but this is my new one."

"How did you guys get here?" three-eight asked.

"Same way you did, I guess," he replied, and pointed to the portal, and then asked, "Who's he?"

"She," said Kelly firmly, "My name's Kelly."

"Sorry," said Darman, holding up his hands, "No offense, but I couldn't tell with the armor." Three-eight then remembered what they were trying to do and he said urgently, "We have to get out of here."

"Why?" asked Darman.

"You know General Grievous?" asked three-eight.

Three-eight could see him stiffen in shock, "He's not here?"

"Yes, and he's hunting us down. Well, me and Kelly and the rest of my squad. But I'm sure you'll be on the list soon enough."

Darman nodded and ran over to his squad and started to speak urgently. Three-eight turned around to make sure no one had followed them. When he didn't see anyone, he turned back to see one commando carrying the wounded one, with the other one leading the way.

"Boss, isn't it?" asked the commando, when three-eight nodded he replied, "Fi, nice shooting there."

"Name's Atin," said the one carrying the wounded commando, "But if what you say is true, then we better get out of here."

"This way," said three-eight and he lead the way out of the Prophet's chamber back into the hallway and the way they came. They were able to find the Covenant ship without trouble and Fixer leaped out when they arrived to help out.

"What's up, Fixer?" asked Darman.

"Darman?" asked Fixer in the same surprise as three-eight.

"No time," said three-eight, "We have to go before Grievous gets back." They all got into the Covenant ship, which was already heated up and ready to take off with Dr. Halsey on the controls. Kelly joined her and together, they got the ship to take off. When they reached space, Dr. Halsey asked, "Where to?"

"We should probably head back to _Cairo Station_," said three-eight.

"Sounds good," replied Dr. Halsey and then she turned back to the controls and got the ship heading towards _Cairo_.

* * *

>The Chief, Sev, and Scorch were heading down the corridors on Cairo to see Lord Hood. They wanted to get the chance to rescue the prisoners that were being held on Jecovah. As they reached the bridge, they saw Lord Hood standing with his hands clasped behind his back, looking at the screens that showed the battle between the human and the Covenant.

As he heard them approach, he turned around. The Chief and the others saluted and Lord Hood returned it.

"At ease," he said and they lowered their hands, "Do you need something, Chief?"

"Yes, sir," he replied, then said, "As you know, Fixer was captured by Grievous, but we also figured out that three-eight was captured by him too."

Lord Hood sighed, "I should have known, but I can figure out what you want, Chief." He paused for a moment then said, "You want permission to rescue the prisoners?"

The Chief nodded, "Yes, sir."

Lord Hood was about to reply when a lieutenant on the controls said, "Sir, incoming Covenant ship. They are sending a transmission through, should I accept it?" The Chief thought that a look of worry went across Lord Hood's face, but his face soon returned expressionless and he said, "Send it through." They waited a moment then a face so familiar to the Chief appeared on the screen, a face he hadn't seen for a long time.

Dr. Halsey.

"Long time, no see Lord Hood," said Dr. Halsey. Then the Chief saw something else that made his heart leap. Three-eight and Kelly were standing right behind Dr. Halsey, listening to the conversation.

"Dr. Halsey!" Lord Hood said in surprise, "But, how?"

"Kelly and I made the mistake of landing our ship on Jecovah, only to be captured byâ€|" and she turned to three-eight, who muttered "General Grievous, ma'am."

"Yes, I know who he is," replied Lord Hood, hearing three-eight, "Me and him had a little chat a couple days ago."

"Well, as you can tell we escaped and are heading your way. I assume we have permission to land?"

Lord Hood nodded to the lieutenant and then replied, "Yes."

"Good, we'll be there in a little bit. But we need a medic down there, one of the commandoes was hurt and he needs medical attention right away," she paused then added to the Chief, "And it's good to see you again, John." The Chief nodded and the screen went blank. The Chief saw Scorch, who was standing at his right, look at him then

look away.

"Well, Chief," said Lord Hood, "I think that answers your question. I think you should go down and meet them." The Chief saluted and so did Sev and Scorch, then turned and left.

"John?" asked Scorch.

"My old name, before I became Master Chief," he replied..

"So you do have a name," replied Scorch.

"Dr. Halsey is the only one who uses it, everyone else that used that name is dead now, except for Kelly." Scorch nodded in understanding, he didn't want to be called that, not by Dr. Halsey, not by anyone. It brought back bad memories, of Sam, his best friend, of Chief Mendez, his trainer until he left to train another group of Spartans, and all the other Spartans that used to call him that.

All dead.

He pushed those thoughts out of his head and concentrated on getting to the docking bay. Dr. Halsey had said that one of the commandoes was hurt, and it didn't look like three-eight was hurt, except for his arm. So the commando had to be Fixer.

When they arrived at the docking bay, the ship had landed and the medics were wheeling someone away on a stretcher.

But it wasn't Fixer.

The Chief looked on in confusion, wondering who the commando was.

"Chief!"

The Chief looked over and saw three-eight sitting down, with a medic looking at his arm, which was obviously broken. Fixer stood by, beckoning the Chief and the others over. The Chief joined them and asked, "Who was the commando?"

"We're not sure," answered Fixer, "But he's from a squad that came through the portal."

"Who are the others?" asked Sev.

"You remember Darman, don't you?" asked three-eight.

"Yeah, he died on Geonosis," answered Scorch, "Why?"

"He's here," said Fixer.

"What!" replied Scorch in a loud voice, "How?"

"He and his new squad found the portal and came through," replied three-eight, "But that's not all, Sidious brought the whole droid army here."

"That can't be good," said Sev, "That must have took a while, getting them in from that little portal."

"I don't know," said three-eight, "It think he's using another way."

Just then, Kelly and Dr. Halsey left the ship and walked over to their group. Kelly drew with her fingers across her faceplate in a smile, a gesture they've always used to show an emotional outburst. The Chief returned the gesture; he was overjoyed to see that Kelly and Dr. Halsey had returned from their mission, and that they were still alive. He had never expected to see them again.

"I'm sure we've missed a lot since we've been gone," said Dr. Halsey.

"Yes," said the Chief, "But not as much as you would think."

"What's happened then?" she asked.

He then jumped into the explanation, pausing briefly after describing what happened to the other Spartans. The Chief could see Kelly's shoulders sag with grief and Dr. Halsey's face looked as if it was carved from stone.

"Please continue, John," she managed to say.

He then continued on to how he and Johnson made it back to Cairo, and then how Lord Hood had given them the mission to destroy what they had thought then was a small Covenant fleet stationed at Jecovah. Of how he and Johnson had been captured, how he was forced to go back in time through the portal the Covenant had made.

By then the rest of Omega Squad had joined them and they remained silent as the Chief continued on. The Chief then explained how he had met up with Delta Squad and how General Grievous had cornered them into a cave and was about to kill him when Mace Windu showed up.

"So that's what happened to Mace Windu," murmured one of the commandos, "By the way, I'm Darman."

"You found him?" asked three-eight, who was replacing his armor around his arm.

He nodded, "We found him dead right outside the portal," he said sadly.

"So he tried to save us," said Fixer.

"But what happened next?" asked Atin..

Now three-eight helped him with this part of the story, saying how Grievous had followed them and captured the Chief and Scorch. Then how they had escaped and all had made it off and back to Cairo.

"So how did the Covenant make it to Earth?" asked Dr. Halsey.

"They already knew of where it was," said the Chief, speaking of when Cortana had announced to them that the Covenant had found Earth, "But they took out the Athens and the Malta and were about to blow up Cairo but we managed to save it. During that time they made it

through to Earth. Then you've known what's happened from then on." Just then, they could hear Lord Hood's voice in the speakers, "Master Chief, Dr. Halsey, I want you on the bridge ASAP."

"Well, we better go, it must be something important," said Dr. Halsey. The Chief nodded and followed her to the bridge.

* * *

>Three-eight wondered what was going on; it must have something to do with Earth if he only called the Chief and Dr. Halsey.<p><p>

"Wonder what's going on," asked Fixer.

"I have no clue," said Atin, "I don't even know where I am right now." Just then, Cortana appeared on the pedestal by where they were standing.

"Welcome back," she said to them, "It's nice to see you again, Kelly."

"You too, Cortana," she replied.

"But I don't know who you three are," she said to Omega Squad, "But I have good news for you anyways. Your fourth member is going to be alright." Three-eight could see them all sag out of relief, glad to know that their Sergeant was going to be ok.

"That is good news," said Atin, "Thank you."

"Your welcome," she replied, "I'll give you updates on how he is." Then she disappeared.

"So, how did you guys get here?" asked Scorch.

"Same way you did," said Darman, "Through the portal."

"But, how did you find it?" asked three-eight.

"By you guys," answered Fi, and when they still looked confused he said, "Your last transmission that is, from when you talked with your clone advisor."

"Same way Mace Windu did?" asked Sev.

"Yes," answered Darman, "Obi-Wan Kenobi told us to look for you and Mace Windu. But we found him dead, and then we looked around and found the portal."

"I can tell you one thing though," said Scorch.

"What's that?" asked Sev.

"Grievous is going to be one pissed off Cyborg."

"That's the second time we've slipped through his fingers," said Fixer, "You think he'll just learn and quit now."

"No," said three-eight, "They've got a plan in motion."

"What plan?" asked Atin.

"They're planning on taking over this universe too," he said gravely.

"Are you serious?" said Scorch.

"Put the pieces together," three-eight said, "They've got the whole droid army here, Sidious is making appearances here, and Grievous won't leave. We're not that important; they could just let us be and wait until we return to strike."

"Are you sure Sidious is here, Boss?" asked Darman, "Because we didn't see him at all."

"He might not be here anymore," replied three-eight, "But he was."

"You sure?" asked Atin.

"Positive," said three-eight, and then said quietly, "He interrogated me."

Everyone was quiet for a moment, and then Fi said, "Well, that answers that question." Atin hit him across the arm, "What? It's true!"

"It is," said three-eight, smiling underneath his helmet, "But what we need to concentrate on is the here and now."

* * *

>The Chief and Dr. Halsey entered the bridge to find Lord Hood waiting for them. The Chief saluted and he said, "At ease," without returning the salute. The Chief knew there was something wrong.<p><p>

"Chief, Dr. Halsey, I hate to say that Metropolis has been destroyed."

"How?" asked the Chief.

"The Covenant made a jump inside the city, sending a wave through it, destroying everything. But that's not it."

"What else could possibly happened?" asked Dr. Halsey.

"Commander Keyes managed to jump with the ship and where it led themâ€|" He paused, and then said, "The pictures are coming now. Chief, you're not going to like it."

The Chief had no clue what he was talking about, but waited patiently for the images to come through. When they did, the Chief thought he was just seeing things. Hadn't he and Cortana already destroyed it? But when he knew it wasn't an illusion, he clenched his hands in anger.

It was another Halo.

* * *

>Author's note:** Longest yet, and yes I know this chapter may be a little disappointing but I had to get all this stuff out of the way so now I can get to the action. But I maybe wrong, I thought the last chapter wasn't that good and you guys loved it. But just to let you know, school starts on Wednesday for me and I already have swimming practice so I'll try to update as much as I can. Other than that, please review!

16. A Deal Oncoming

Author's note: Guess.

TheAmazingTecnocolorRingWraith: That's okay, don't worry about it.

elfprincess: I'm glad you like me story and sorry it took so long for me to update it.

drunkenwerewolf: Yea, there's a good chance the Arbiter will be here and no I didn't know he was the captain, that's weird to think about.

Easy-Company-506-101: Like I said before you've got enough stuff to make your own fanfic but yea sorry about such a long update.

Shade: If you do make a fanfic like that tell me because yea there is not enough RC fanfics. But I'm not sure if I'm going to put Etain in this story, I've thought about it though. But also can't wait for Triple Zero to come out, did you know that Delta and Omega Squad are teaming up in it?

Yes, I know a VERY long update this time. To give u some excuses

1) I've had swimming every day after school, but it's over now

2) The new season of Red vs. Blue started so I've been on there a lot more

3) I HATE writing chapters like this (no action).

But I have to say the truth is I've been kind of slacking off, but I'm trying to get better. Hopefully the chapter after this one will be out a lot faster, but other than that enjoy.

* * *

>A Deal Oncoming**

"How?" asked the Chief, staring at the monitors with shock and anger.

"I don't know Chief," replied Lord Hood, "But it's there, and if it's as dangerous as the last one we'll have to get rid of it. That's why as soon as we get _In Amber Clad_'s Slip-space coordinates, you, the other Spartan, and the commandoes will be heading out there to explore it."

"I request to come too," said Dr. Halsey, tearing her face away from

the screens and addressing Lord Hood, "I need to learn more about this ring."

He nodded, "Permission granted. I suggest you get geared up and ready to go."

"Yes, sir!" said the Master Chief and he turned around and left with Dr. Halsey.

When they were out in the hallway, Cortana's voice sounded in the Chief's helmet,

"Surprised, aren't you?"

"I never expected it to return," replied the Chief, "When we blew it up, I thought it was all over."

"Well, it apparently isn't," said Dr. Halsey, who had been listening to the conversation, "And it's good to see you again, Cortana."

"You too, Doctor," she replied.

"We better go back and tell the others," the Chief interrupted.

"We can't really plan anything until the Chief gets back," said Scorch, "We might as well rest for a minute."

"I guess you're right," said three-eight, "We'll plan what we're doing when the Chief gets back." Scorch then inched his way over to Kelly and asked, "Can I talk to you for a minute?"

"Sure," she replied and the two edged their way from the group.

"I was just wondering," said Scorch, "Has the Chief always been this uptight?"

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"What I mean is I think he's only laughed once since we got here. He hasn't joked around with anything, he always takes everything seriously."

"He is a leader," she pointed out.

"But Boss is our leader and he jokes around with us all the same."

"I guess I am a little surprised you got him to laugh at all," she replied, "He wasn't always this uptight though."

"So when did it all get so serious?" asked Scorch.

"I'm guessing it was our first fight against the Covenant, when Sam died."

"Sam?"

"Sam, John, Chief to you, and me were all friends since the second day of Boot Camp when we had to work on a team together. Sam, John, and I used to mess around with each other, until John became leader.

He became more serious, but he never forgot our friendship.

"One day the ship we were on was attacked by a Covenant ship. It was our first time with our armor so the Spartans decided to jump into the vessel and take it out from the inside. We three were the only ones who made it in there. We moved toward the center and we met a jackal, took it out easily because we surprised it. But the second time we didn't, it had its gun charged and shield up.

"It tried to shoot John with the charged plasma but Sam pushed him out of the way and took the shot, and a few more, leaving a hole in his armor. Once we reached the control center, John ordered Sam to stay behind because he knew that Sam wouldn't make it through the vacuum back to our ship, he would suffocate. We planted the bomb and John and I left. I remember him saying to me, 'Don't look back, Spartan.' Since then he's always taking everything seriously."

Scorch sat silent for a minute and said, "I never knew."

"He doesn't like talking about his past, none of us do."

"I'm sorry." Scorch started.

"No, don't," she replied, "Just don't tell the Chief I told you this."

"Alright," replied Scorch and as if on cue the Chief and Dr. Halsey walked in. Scorch and Kelly went back over to the group just as the Chief and Dr. Halsey did.

"We have bad news," said the Chief, and Cortana appeared on the pedestal once again as he shared the news, "We have another Halo." Omega squad had no clue what he was talking about, but Fixer spoke up, "You're not talking about the Halo you destroyed, are you?"

"It's a Halo," replied the Chief, "But it's not the same one."

"There's more than one?" asked three-eight.

"Looks like it," said Dr. Halsey.

"From what you told us," said Sev, "That thing packs a huge punch."

"Wait," Atin interrupted, "What's this 'Halo' you guys are talking about?"

"It's a ring world that can wipe out all life in the galaxy," said the Chief.

"Way to put it lightly," said Scorch.

"And you destroyed it," said Darman, "But now there's another one?"

"Exactly."

"So what are we going to do about this one?" asked three-eight.

"Lord Hood is going to ship us out there as soon as we get Miranda's coordinates," replied Dr. Halsey, "So I suggest you guys gear up and get as much rest as you can." And with that she turned around and walked away, but as soon as she left Sergeant Johnson walked over to the group with Adams following him,

"What's going on?" he asked. Before any of the others could answer, the Chief nodded to a place away from the group and Johnson, understanding what he meant, walked with him over to that spot to talk separately.

"How come he's doing that?" asked Fixer. Kelly, who was the only one who knew what was going on, said, "He's going to take this the worst."

"Why?" asked three-eight. She then told them about all the marines that were taken by the Flood and how Johnson himself was attacked but had somehow got away. Just as she finished her story, they could hear Johnson yell, "SAY WHAT?"

"Seems to be taking it just fine to me," said Scorch.

* * *

>As Grievous landed his ship, he instantly knew something was wrong. His bodyguard's ship wasn't there, and he knew they would have landed far ahead of him. His ship landed and the door opened and he made his way to the base. Inside he headed down the hallway toward the cell to make sure the MagnaGuards got the job done, but on the way he got his answer.<p><p>

Right by the armory there were grenade marks and lying at his feet were one of his guards. He immediately took off towards the prison cells only to find them empty, but maybe they had been able to move them after all. He knew it was a small chance, but he headed towards the throne room and found it empty.

"They better have not escaped," he muttered angrily and made his way towards the control room. He entered and one of his guards approached him,

"Sir, the prisonersâ€¦"

"Escaped?" Grievous asked menacingly.

"Yes, sir." Grievous hit him aside and made his way to the control panel.

"Show me what happened." The guard hit a button and a recording appeared on one of the video screens. It showed the SBDs and destroyers herding the prisoners down the hall, none of them at the ready. "Let me guess, they escaped here?" asked Grievous and as soon as he finished the sentence the commando and the green soldier leaped forward, taking out the two lead SBDs. Then at an incredible speed picked up the marine and the woman and both sprinted down the hallway into the armory where he had been just a few minutes ago. The door shut then he saw it lock and the droids ran down after them and fired

on the door to make it open. The guard fast forwarded it to when the two guards that had gone to Earth with him led the other commando down the hallway to where they were. One of the guards walked up to the droid and began talking to it. Then without warning the door flew open and three grenades came out, killing all the droids except for the remaining MagnaGuard and the commando, who were standing off to the side.

The MagnaGuard immediately sprang into action, jumping the other commando that had walked out but the marine and the soldier were there to fend him off and soon he lay dead on the floor. They all conversed with each other until two ran off in one direction and three in the other, blocking them from the view of the camera.

"Where are they going?" asked Grievous.

"Here, sir," the guard replied, showing him another camera view. It showed a commando squad fighting in the throne room with a group of SDBs. As he watched he saw the commando and the green soldier enter and help them finish the droids off. Once again they talked then left, leaving the dead droids behind.

"Let me guess," said Grievous fiercely, "This is where they escape?"

"Yes, sir," the droid replied, but as soon as he finished his sentence a beeping started.

"What now?" Grievous asked.

"Sir, a transmission is being sent through."

"What?" he asked confused.

"A transmissionâ€¦" the guard was beginning to reply when the General hit him.

"Play it!" The guard quickly hit the button and a face appeared on the screen, but now just an ordinary face. It was somewhat hairy and had long ears coming down the side of its head and it wore something resembling a crown.

"Greetings General," it said, "I am the Prophet of Truth and I wish I could say you are welcome here but as you have slaughtered all of my Covenant forces that were once in that base, I do not want to lie to you," he paused then continued on, "We know what you are after here, the new commando soldiers that have teamed up with the Demon. I do not know where you are from, but I wish to make a deal with you. The Demon has killed many of our forces and we want him dead. You had the unfortunate chance of meeting him face to face, and you ended up losing your arm." Grievous's eyes opened in surprise, not knowing who he was talking about up to that point, and how he had known about that. He became suddenly more interested.

"The video feeds that have been planted inside that base are not only for it, but we are receiving feeds to this very ship I am currently on. So I have seen your army that you have assembled there too, your droid army. I once again do not know where you got them, but I know a way you can put them to use. I have sent a code with this recording if you wish to reply. I hope we talk soon." And with that, the

transmission ended and the screen became black once more.

"Do you have the code?" asked Grievous.

"Yes, sir."

"Then enter it in."

* * *

>"You think Grievous has figured out that you guys are gone yet?"
asked Scorch.<p><p>

"It's kind of hard to miss it," said Fixer, "They left a huge black mark in the hallway."

"That's not important," said three-eight, "We need to concentrate on the new Halo."

"He's right," said the Chief, "We need to take this seriously."

"You got to cut us some slack here, Chief," said Kelly, "None of us has ever been on a Halo here except you and Johnson."

"Your right," he replied, "Sorry."

"Eh, no biggy," said Scorch, "But what are we planning on doing when we get there?" With this Cortana gave the facts from her pedestal,

"The Covenant already has a firm hold on it, having found it first. What we're planning on doing first is to confirm the fact that the Prophet of Regret is there. If he is, we'll come up with a plan to capture him. He'll be heavily guarded so you'll need to be careful."

"We should probably split into groups so we don't appear so obvious," said Atin, "If ten of us are trying to appear not seen that's not going to go over well."

"Point taken," said three-eight, "Any suggestions, Chief?"

"I don't think you should come because of your broken arm," he replied.

"Fixer?" asked three-eight.

"Got it here," replied Fixer, reaching into his pack and taking out a syringe. He ejected it into his arm and the Chief could tell that the arm healed.

"What?" yelled Scorch, "You could've use that on my leg the whole time and you didn't?"

"That's because your injury wasn't as serious," said Fixer, "And I only have two. Also we'll need as many people to deal with the new Halo."

He was about to argue back then figured out it was useless and remained quiet.

"So Chief," said three-eight, "How do you think we should split up?"

"I would just say stick with your squads," replied the Chief, "But since Omega Squad's sergeant is out of action and they don't know anything about this place, I think we should separate differently."

"I think my squad can stay together, but we'd need someone who knows this place to come with us."

"I could," said Johnson, who had gotten over his shock, replied, "I know the Marine Corp. inside and out."

"And I can go with Omega Squad since they only have three," said the Chief, "But Cortana, do we know where Regret is?"

"No," she answered, "But we'll do a little searching and I'm sure we'll find it, bound to be the biggest structure there."

"We've got the plan somewhat laid out then," the Chief announced, "So we might as well gear up and get as much rest as we can like Dr. Halsey said."

"Sounds good to me," said Scorch, laying back.

"I'd rather be back out on the battlefield," replied Sev, cocking his Sniper.

"When do you _not _want to be on the battlefield?" asked Scorch.

"He's got a point there," Fixer said, getting up and stretching, "Where's the armory again, Chief? I need some new weapons."

"Same with us," said Darman, "Out DCs are bound to run out sometime."

"I'll lead you there," replied the Chief as he turned around and started to walk out of landing bay. Omega Squad and Fixer got up to follow him, leaving the rest of Delta Squad, Kelly, Johnson and Adams.

"I've got a Shotgun," said Adams, holding it up, "Now that's all I need."

"You're obsessed with them, son," said Johnson, "You really need a longer ranged weapon otherwise you can kiss your ass goodbye when you're getting sniped."

"Come on, Sarge," he said, "You know I always carry a Battle Rifle. I'm not that stupid."

"Sometimes I doubt that," said Johnson. Adams just smiled and said, "I'm gettin' more ammo. I'm goin' on this mission, right?"

"You sure as hell are," replied Johnson, "Unless you don't want too, of course."

"When have I ever turned down a mission?" he asked, then turned around and headed towards the armory.

"That marine's got a mouth on him," said Johnson, taking out a cigar and lighting it. Three-eight could tell though that he was joking, and he could tell that they had already met by the conversation. He once again thought about the clones, now working for the Empire. That led him to think about the other commando squads and the ARC troopers. He figured they had enough sense not to believe Order 66, but he didn't want to think what would happen to them once they declined and were caught. Omega Squad had made it, and were helping Obi-Wan from the sound of it. But both squads were being hunted down with mercy so far. But now they had escaped from Grievous again, he didn't think that mercy would last.

"Whatcha thinking about, Boss?" asked Scorch. Each commando squad knew each other well, and could tell what their feelings were. He knew Scorch could tell he was worried.

"Nothing," he replied, "I'm just thinking about the clones back in our own Galaxy."

"You know," said Sev, "I've been thinking about them too. How can they be so thick-headed as to believe Order 66?"

"Order 66?" asked Kelly, "What's that?"

"It was an order given to us clones which said that the Jedi are our enemies and that we should kill them," answered three-eight, "The Jedi are our Commanders and Generals."

"Was it true?" Johnson asked.

"'Course not," replied Scorch, "But the clones were trained to obey every order they get, and so they carried it out."

"And you didn't?" Kelly said.

"Exactly," answered Sev, "Us commandos were trained in a different way to have enough sense to tell when an order was accurate."

"So what happened to the other commando squads?" asked Johnson.

"That was just what I was thinking about," replied three-eight, "Wondering if they made it or not."

"What do you mean 'made it'?" asked Kelly.

"I know that if they didn't agree to obey Order 66 and didn't work with the Empire, they would be caught and get punished. And I know that that punishment would be fatal." They remained silent for a moment, brooding on whether they could or could not have made it. Then Scorch said, "Who knows if they did or not, we'll just have to figure it out when we get back."

"Your right," said three-eight getting up, "The rest of us should stock up on ammo also. I know we won't have enough after Metropolis."

"I know you don't know where it is," said Johnson, also getting up, "I'll lead ya there."

"Alright, let's go," said Scorch, "I need some more explosives."

* * *

>Author's note: WOO! Finally, got it done. Once again I apologize for the long update; I'll try really hard not to do it again. Also though, for those people who read Hard Contact the sequel is coming out in February. It's called Triple Zero and in it Delta and Omega Squad team up, which I think is friekin awesome. Okay, that's it, hope you enjoyed the new chapter!

17. Helljumper Style

****Author's note:**** ...

Warrior: Awesome! I didn't know that was coming out, I'll have to get that.

RC 1205 Shade: Have to underline your name now, lol. Glad you got a name on her, but my favorite Omega has to be either Darman or Fi. But yea Triple Zero is gonna kick ass. And yes there is more action, finally. And thanks so much for giving me that clone website, its friekin awesome.

xXxoddman: They don't have DCs because they go into the future but they also go into a different galaxy. So I probably shouldn't have said they went into the future since that's confusing people but I guess I paid too much attention to 'a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away'.

Yoshidude5371: Omg dude, I can't believe you put that! Let's keep that in our game of Halo 2, shall we? lol.

Firefox116: Yeah, I'll most likely go back to the star wars universe in the sequel I'll make. And now that the Halo movie is actually coming out, and the fact that Peter Jackson is helping make it, I'm friekin pumped.

Okay, since we've been able to reply to reviews in the email I tried that. But I thought it was pointless so I just kept doing them in the chapter, but other than that on to the story!

* * *

>Helljumper Style

As they waited for the coordinates of the new Halo, everyone that was going relaxed until then. They were all in a room, with the Chief, Johnson, Atin and three-eight talking, Kelly, Sev, Fi and Fixer cleaning their weapons, and Adams showing Scorch and Darman how to use a rocket launcher.

"You know, I'm not sure how to hold it," said Scorch, making fun of the directions on the side.

Adams started laughing, "They think that we're too stupid to figure

that out. It's not like I'm going to hold it like this," and he held it upside down.

"I think they put that on there just to take up room," replied Darman.

"Actually Scorch," said Fixer, coming over, "I think you might need that."

"Shut up, Fixer," he said.

"What's he talkin' about?" asked Darman.

"You want to know how he got his nickname?"

"No, trust me you don't," Scorch answered quickly.

"No, really, I do," replied Adams, grinning.

"Well, during an exercise involving explosives, he set them wrong. So, when they blew, he and his sergeant got caught in the blast, leaving them with no eyebrows."

"Hey, I was new at it!" said Scorch over them laughing.

"Anyway," Adams finally managed after laughing so hard, "How do you guys get your nicknames?"

"Usually the rest of the squad gives them to us," answered Darman, "Wither they're based off of our numbers or something we did."

"So, how'd you guys get yours?"

"I'm an expert at slicing computers," said Fixer, "So that's why I got Fixer."

"You already know why I got mine," said Scorch bitterly, "But Sev just got his from his number, which is 07."

"Same with Fi and Niner," replied Darman, "Whose numbers are 15 and 09."

"What about you and Atin?" asked Fixer.

"Not sure," said Darman, obviously thinking, "Can't remember how I got mine."

"Atin means 'stubborn' in Mandalorian, which explains him to a tee," said Fi.

"Mandalorian?" asked Adams.

"A language by Mandalorian warriors," replied Fixer, "They're a race that was wiped out, and only one lived, Jango Fett, who we were cloned off of."

"Oh," said Adams.

"Yeah I'm sure you're confused," said Sev, "But Boss got his, well since he's the boss."

"Scorch started that one," said Fixer.

While they were talking, the rest were making up a more developed plan.

"I think that's about it," said three-eight, "Can't really see how we can develop it more until we actually get there."

"Yea," replied Johnson, leaning back, "That's it; we might as well relax while we can."

"The others have already started," said Atin, gesturing to the others talking and laughing. When he did that, Scorch looked up and asked, "Finally done?"

"Yea," replied Boss.

"'Bout time," said Fi, "You guys have been over there forever."

"Better to have a well, laid out plan then to get planet side and not have a plan at all."

"He's got a point," said Kelly.

Just then, a voice came out over the speakers, "Master Chief, please report to the bridge."

The Chief got up and said, "That's probably it."

"Hopefully," replied Johnson. As the Chief left, he stopped to let somebody come through the door before him, somebody who was in bandages and on crutches with a nurse walking beside him. He nodded to the Chief, who nodded back and went out to the hallway.

"Niner!" said Darman, "You're alright!"

"Never been better," he replied, grinning and making his way over.

"Don't give me that, Sarge," said Fi, getting up and walking over to him. Niner looked at the others sitting there and saw the other commandos,

"Delta Squad, right?"

Boss nodded, also getting up to meet him, "Right, I'm the sergeant of the squad." As he reached him Boss held out a hand, and Niner took a hand off one of his crutches and shook hand. They then let go and Niner said,

"I'm sure the rest of my squad has already told you I'm the sergeant of our squad."

"Yes," replied Boss, taking off his helmet, "They have told me, but it looks like you ran into some trouble."

"A little bit," Niner said, grinning, "And it looks like you did too."

"What?" asked Boss, confused. He couldn't think of anything that was wrong, since his arm was fully healed now, he hadn't taken fire or anything.

"Your face," said Niner, "What'd you do? Fry it?"

"Let me see, Boss," said Scorch and he turned to face him, "Holy fierfek Boss, what did you do?"

"Nothing," said Boss, still mystified about what they were seeing, "I didn't do anything to my face."

"It looks like you threw your face into a fire," said Fixer, "Well, half your face." Boss took off his glove and felt his face. They were right, it felt blistered on one half of his face, yet it didn't hurt at all. He tried to think back to when his Pelican was shot down, could that have been it? No, then his helmet would have been fried as well. He then tried to think of anything electrical that could have done it, and it hit him like a brick.

The Emperor's force lightning.

He hadn't realized that the lightning would've left a scar like that, and so fast too. The others had noticed he figured it out and Atin asked, "What was it?"

"It's not important," said Boss, replacing his helmet. He knew that his squad could tell something was wrong, but they didn't pry.

"Just a question," said Niner, "Where are we?"

"Oh yeah, forgot you wouldn't know," said Darman, "I don't really know exactly where we are either, but I can tell you we're in a different galaxy then when we started out in." Boss could tell he was surprised and said, "We were surprised also when the Chief told us that."

"Chief?" asked Niner, "Was he the one who walked out before I came in?"

"Yeah," said Atin, "He's the Master Chief."

Niner nodded as he tried to take it all in, Boss knew though that it was hard to learn everything at once. He and his squad had got it at a little bit at a time.

"And who are you guys?" Niner asked Kelly and Johnson.

"The names Johnson," he said, "I'm a Sergeant and this here is Kelly," she nodded to him.

"Kelly and Boss saved our asses," said Darman.

"Thanks, nice to meet you," he said, "But what do you mean by a completely different galaxy?"

"Exactly what we said," said Fi, "When we went through that teleporter we got sent here, to this galaxy."

He was about to say something else when the Chief came back in and said, "It's time."

"Finally!" said Sev, grabbing his gun, "It has felt like days!"

"Sev, you are horrible at keeping track of time," said Scorch, "It's only been an hour."

"I said it _felt_ like it," replied Sev.

"Don't start now," sighed Fixer, "We haven't even started the mission."

"What's going on?" asked Niner.

"Well," said Fi, "To tell you the short story we've found a Halo that can wipe out all life in the galaxy so we're going to blow it up."

"I don't even want to hear the long story."

"Yeah, I don't think you want to either," said Atin, picking up his new Battle Rifle and SMG.

"I think I'll have to stay here then too," said Niner, eyeing his crutches.

"Yes you are," said the nurse, who had been quiet during the conversation, "If you go out there you'll get worse then you already are!"

"You better listen to her," said Johnson, grinning.

"Alright," sighed Niner, "You guys be careful, and don't do anything stupid."

"You say that every time, mother," replied Fi, "Don't worry Sarge, we'll be fine."

"I'll make sure they don't," said Atin.

Niner grinned and said, "See you when you get back, but if I'm better before you do I'm heading out there." And with that he turned and limped away back to his quarters.

"You guys ready?" asked the Chief.

"We're all packed and ready to go when you are," said Boss.

"Same here," copied Atin.

"We've been waitin' a while Chief," said Johnson, "We're all ready."

"Alright," he said, "We'll be taking the ship _Attero_ which will take us to Halo."

"Then we'll execute the plan from there, right?" asked Boss.

"Yes," he replied.

"Then lets go already!" exclaimed Johnson.

* * *

>As Grievous waited for the prophet guy to respond, he considered what the commandos would do next thinking now that they were officially a part of this war. As he was thinking a beeping started and the MagnaGuard said, "Incoming message."<p><p>

"Open it," he ordered and the Prophet of Truth appeared on the screen, smiling.

"I'm glad you've considered my request," he said.

"I've considered it," Grievous replied coolly, "But what exactly is it?"

"Well, your commandos and the Demon have joined forces against each of us," he paused, "I say we join up against them, Covenant and Droids together. They wouldn't stand a chance." Grievous narrowed his eyes, "How do I know this isn't some kind of trick?"

"You don't," he replied, smiling broader, "But I know you and your Droids alone cannot take down the Demon and his army. Already he has killed thousands of the Covenant."

Grievous had not known these facts. He didn't even have a thousand droids here, and now with two squads of commandos helping, it would be before long that the droids had been completely wiped out.

"I can give you time to consider your answer," said the Prophet.

"No," Grievous said, "I shall join you, but I do not take orders from anyone."

"You don't?" he asked casually, "I'm sure you must take orders from somebody, you are only a general." He brought himself up to his full height and said,

"Let me put it this way. I don't take orders from you." He knew Truth had gotten the message, as he backed up a little and said,

"I understand, we shall pick you and your army up," and with that the transmission ended. The general stood in thought for a moment, but was instantly in action,

"Get the droids ready for take off," he said to the MagnaGuards.

"Yes, sir," they said and went out the door. Grievous then took out his holo panel. There was one more person he had to contact.

* * *

>"We'll be arriving in 20 minutes," announced Cortana from inside the Chief's helmet.<p><p>

"You know," said Atin, resting in one of the chairs in the room, "This Slipspace is pretty much exactly like our Hyperspace."

"Now that you mention it," said Boss, "It does, same speed, and I guess same accuracy."

"The Covenant bastards have it better then us," scoffed Johnson through his cigar, "They could appear right in the middle of a battle if they wanted too."

"Now that's accurate," said Scorch, who was seated next to him. He then turned to his other side and hit Sev on the arm.

"We there?" asked Sev, instantly grabbing his gun.

"No, not yet," replied Darman, "We've got about 20 minutes."

"You shoulda let me sleep more then," said Sev, leaning back again.

"You know that if we let you sleep too long you'll never get up," laughed Fixer.

"Same with Fi," said Atin.

"Okay, that's not true," he defended, "I'd be up in a secondâ€¦"

"â€¦If you really wanted too," Darman finished for him, "But we all know that you'd prefer to sleep on the job."

"Kaminoans would have my head for that," he said, then added, "Literally."

"Now who's that?" asked Adams.

"Kaminoans? They pretty much raised us to be perfect," replied Boss.

"Now they're something to be scared of," said Scorch.

"Sounds like Chief Mendez," Kelly said as she smiled. She had her helmet off and was adjusting it. Her face was as pale as the Chiefs and her hair as short.

"Now we ask you," said Scorch, "Who's that?"

"He was our trainer in the Spartan program," replied the Chief, "He left after we 'graduated', saying he had to train another group of Spartans. I haven't seen him since." He didn't bother to say that he was probably dead, like the rest of the personnel on Reach.

"Sounds like good old Kal," said Darman, "Before you ask he was Fi's, Niner's and my training sergeant."

"We had Wolan Vau," said Boss.

"Same here," Atin added.

"My Sergeant I guess you could say was Johnson," said Adams,

grinning.

"I did a pretty fine job with you," said Johnson.

"We should start getting ready," said Cortana, "We won't have much time when we get to Delta Halo."

"Delta Halo?" asked the Chief, "I thought it was just Halo."

"We've discovered a name for it," she replied, "I guess I forgot to mention it."

"Aw, you're so sweet," said Scorch, "Naming it after us."

"Yeah, that's exactly what I did," she replied with obvious sarcasm.

"That's a burn," said Sev.

"She'll do ya next, don't worry," Johnson said, "Jus' a matter of time."

"But she is right," said Boss, "We'll have to get ready for drop off."

"Drop off?" asked Fi, having not been apart of the plans.

"Yeah, drop off," said Johnson, "Helljumper style, except I won't get to go with you, I've gotta stay up here with Commander Keyes."

* * *

>"Just pick a pod and hold on," said the Chief, leading them to the pods.<p><p>

"Well, isn't this gonna be fun," replied Darman.

"Look at it this way, Dar," stated Fi, "You won't have to worry about hurting your leg this time."

"It's not my fault I landed on a tree," he retorted, climbing into one of the pods. Everyone else did the same with a few helljumpers with them. In each pod there was a view screen, showing what Delta Halo really looked like.

"For being so dangerous," said Boss, "It sure does look nice."

"Everyone ready?" asked Commander Keyes over the speaker. Everyone replied yes, and Johnson came up, checking everyone's pods, "Okay, Chief, we'll be dropping you and Omega Squad off first to head for the temple from one direction. Also until I can move in and fight, I'm going to keep a low profile. Once you leave the ship, you're on your own. Johnson will be following you in with two Pelicans. We'll drop off Delta Squad to approach from another direction."

Johnson walked by and hit the Chief's pod, and he hit back replying, "Understood."

"Over the target in five," said a crewman on the bridge, and five

seconds later the Chief and Omega Squad, along with five helljumpers, dropped down and fell towards Halo.

* * *

>Author's note:** Yes, I'm sorry, another long update. But since Battlefront 2 came out I've been playing that, and yes kinda slacked off. But trust me I am really trying to write this, and I won't quit. You've got my word. And please review, I love getting feed back about my story and I appreciate constructive criticism so I can fix the problems.

18. Wounded

Author's note: I don't trust that reply to the reviews in an email thing, even though I have gotten a few, but ill just keep posting them in here.

ChaosWolf021: Thanks, like I said before you've got really detailed reviews and I like that. There might be a chance there will be a cliffhanger at the end of this story, but I doubt it. And since there is going to be a sequel it won't be too big of a deal.

DrakeDragon: I kind of changed some of the events and when I first started out this story I really had no plan, and I wrote some of this before episode 3. So I didn't know Mace had a hand missing. And now that you mention it I kinda have demoted his lightsaber skills, CRAP. I really need to upgrade them, lol. And the Arbiter will come in at a later chapter; it's going to be hard introducing him though. And for the emperor, I'll explain it in a later chapter and a lot of other things too. And I don't like his coughing, so I took it away. But that's no problem, I like long reviews, lets me know everything I'm doing wrong and how to fix them. Thanks for it!

Yoshidude5371: I'll deal with you later, lol.

Alright nothing else except thanks everyone for the reviews. I've broke the 250 point, not that the number is really all important but it shows how much you guys actually enjoy my story. So thanks to anyone who has left a review here and double thanks to everyone who's stuck with my story all this way. Okay, you guys probably want the story so here it isAlso just a little heads up, this chapter is fast paced and switches point of views a lot so really pay attention to that.

* * *

>Wounded

"Mind the bump," said Cortana as the Chief and Omega Squad plummeted towards Delta Halo. As they were heading down the Covenant forces below spotted them, and their turrets opened fire. Fortunately they made it down safely, jumping out of their pods and pulling out their Battle Rifles.

"Sir!" a helljumper yelled to the Chief, "We've got to neutralize those turrets!"

"Darman!" the Chief called over the COM link, "Get rid of those

turrets!"

"Consider it done," he replied, pulling out his Rocket Launcher. He jogged up the path a bit to get out of the cover of the trees and crouched down, aiming. A moment later he shot out a rocket out, hitting the turret.

"Nice shot, Dar," said Atin.

"Kinda hard not to miss," replied Darman, "It's got a lock on feature."

"You not supposed to say that!" said Fi, taking down the few grunts that come down the path, "We're supposed to think you're actually good!"

"Ha ha, very funny," Darman said sarcastically and aimed to take out another turret.

"Heads up, we've got some elites heading out of the building," said the Chief, spotting them through his Battle Rifle scope. There were two red elites and a blue elite.

"Atin, Fi, you guys flank left. Darman, come with me and flank right. Helljumpers distract them in the middle, concentrate your fire on the blue one," the Chief ordered.

"Alright, let's go," said Atin, and then he and Fi headed up the left side with the Chief and Darman on the right. The helljumpers found cover and fired at the elites, who returned fire unaware of the Spartan and three commandos sneaking up from behind. The Chief was the first to leap from cover, hitting one of the red elites in the back of the head. It fell forward, dying instantly. Darman was right on his heels, shooting the other red elite. His shields held but with the distraction Atin came out, grabbed the elites shoulder and drove his vibro blade through his back. The elite howled in pain, falling to his knees and ended up on the ground.

The blue elite turned around and noticed his two comrades had fallen, and that he was completely surrounded. He roared in rage and leapt at the nearest person, a helljumper. The helljumper brought up his gun to protect himself from the elites gun, which it was using as a club. But the elite knocked it away and hit him in the head, knocking him backwards. Before he could finish him off the others all shot him, killing him instantly.

Another helljumper ran to help him while the Chief and the commandos ran to clear the building.

"Is he alright?" asked Darman, kneeling beside the unconscious helljumper.

"Yes," he said, glancing up at the commando, "Just out cold."

"Buildings clear!" They heard someone yell.

"Let's bring him into the building," said Darman, "They can evac him out when the pelicans arrive." Darman lifted him onto his shoulders and carried him into the building with the helljumper coming in

behind. He set him down and said, "Give him some cover."

"That's it?" asked Fi, surprised, "I'd expected more."

"Chief! Incoming phantom!" said Cortana, her voice coming out of his helmet speakers.

"There ya go Fi, you jinxed it," Darman said, reloading his rifle.

"We may be here a while," stated the Chief calmly.

* * *

>As Boss's pod landed, he kicked it open and brought his gun to bear, but was surprised not to see any Covenant. Sev and Fixer's pods had landed close to his, but Scorch, Adams, and Kelly's pod had landed up a ways. Adams and Kelly were already out of theirs but there was a loud banging in Scorch's and he shouldered his way out, tripping over the door. <p>"Smooth one there, Scorch," said Adams, helping him up.<p>

"Mechanical things don't like me," he replied, "Honestly."

"Where is everybody?" asked Fixer, looking around.

"Maybe they got scared," said Sev, shrugging.

"No, they don't get scared like that," said Kelly, "Knowing them they'd be swarming all over us."

"They might have gotten distracted by the others," replied Boss.

"Now I know they're able to do that," said Adams.

"We should just move towards the temple," said Kelly, "We'll most likely run into some forces there."

"Not that that's a bad thing of course," said Sev.

"There's a path up here," said Fixer, who with Adams had scouted ahead to find a way while the others were talking.

"Let's take it then," said Boss, heading up with the others following.

* * *

>The Arbiter panted heavily, holding his stomach from the blow he had taken from one of the holograms of the heretic leader. In his hiding place he glanced out only to pull in his head again as the heretic let out a barrage of plasma from his spot in the air. <p>"Come out, Arbiter! I expected you to be more of a challenge!" The Arbiter took a deep breath, trying to calm himself down. He had been able to take out the two holograms; he'd be able to take out the heretic himself too. Bracing himself, he got ready to activate his camouflage. When he did he dove out from his cover, rolling behind a pillar. He glanced out and saw that the heretic had not spotted him. His camouflage wore out, but he didn't need it anymore. Crouching down he

snuck around the heretic, using boxes for cover.<p>

"I should have known someone working for the prophets would be so cowardly!" he called to the empty space. Just then the heretic lurched forward as the Arbiter jumped on his back, pulling out his plasma sword. He drove the sword into his back, destroying the jetpack and causing them both to fall to the ground. Without hesitating, he leaped forward, trying to slice the heretic. The heretic brought up one of his plasma rifles trying to block it but the sword sliced right through it. The Arbiter brought down his sword again only to cut another plasma rifle. The heretic leader, now weaponless, glared at him. The Arbiter glared back and pulled back his sword and then stabbed the heretic's stomach. He glanced down at it, then stared the Arbiter right in the eye and managed to say, "One day, Arbiter, you'll realize what the prophets plan to do, and you will regret ever killing me.

"Save it for hell," he retorted and pulled out the sword. The heretic fell forward, dead. The Arbiter grabbed him and pulled him towards the door that led outside. As he did the Monitor came down to hover next to them.

"How unfortunate, his edification was most enjoyable."

"I had no choice, Holy Oracle," he explained, "This heretic imperiled the Great Journey."

"Oracle? Great Journey? Why do you meddlers insist on using such inaccurate verbiaâ€|Whooooaaaaa!" The Monitor was cut off when he was pulled back from some force. The Arbiter turned quickly to see Tartarus, leader of the Brutes, suck him up into his hammer. He pulled the Monitor from it and held it in the air, grinning at the Arbiter.

"That is the Oracle!" exclaimed the Arbiter both shocked and confused.

"So it is," he replied unimportantly, throwing the Monitor into the gravity lift, "Come, we are leaving this station." Hating being ordered around by a brute, he followed him into the gravity lift that took them into a phantom. In it he headed towards the back, wanting to be away from the brutes. There he saw the Spec-Ops leader there, better known as Half-Jaw as he only had two mandibles on the same side, with a few other elites.

"Did you do it?" he asked.

"Yes," he replied, "He will no longer be disrupting the Great Journey." Half-Jaw nodded, pleased to know that the mission was completed. But the Arbiter stood against the wall, thinking of the Heretic's dying wordsâ€|

* * *

>General Grievous waited at the front of half of his droid army with his two remaining MagnaGuards at his side, waiting for the Covenant to arrive. He left half his army here to guard the portal, knowing before this was over the commandos would try to reach it. He glanced up and saw a ship, most likely Covenant, appear out of nowhere and he figured they had something similar to hyperspace. <p>"Get ready," he

said, breaking the silence as he saw a few ships head towards the planet.<p>

As he stepped off the drop ship and into the landing bay, he saw two aliens there waiting for him.

"We are the elites of the Covenant," one said, "We're heading to our base High Charity and there you can meet the prophets." Grievous felt the ship rumble beneath his feet and then felt the familiar lurch as the ship jumped.

* * *

>"Another one?" Darman groaned, seeing the third phantom coming in to drop troops. <p>"Just get ready," said the Chief, "This will most likely be the last one."<p>

"Hope it is," said Darman, "I've only got two rockets left."

"Don't waste your ammo on the phantom's turrets," replied Atin, "We'll just take cover till it leaves."

"Alright, it's getting ready to drop troops," announced the Chief, watching it slow down and stop. They all waited, watching for the troops to come down. When they didn't and the phantom turned around to leave they became confused.

"Um, I think that phantoms broken," said Fi.

The Chief stood there a moment, then realized what happened, "Everyone to the top now!"

"What?" asked Darman, "What's going on?"

"Just go!" said the Chief, picking up the injured helljumper. They headed to the back where there was a path that sloped up to the top. When they reached the top, the Chief set down the helljumper and ordered, "Cover every path to get up here, if you see anything move, anything at all, shoot at it."

"Chief, what's going on?" asked Atin.

"Holy fierfek, why is there a floating sword?" asked Darman.

"Shoot it!" called the Chief, heading over to where he was. Darman brought up his battle rifle and fired. He was surprised to see a black elite appear, but it jumped away and disappeared.

"Spec Ops," said the Chief, scanning to find more.

"They have camouflage?" asked Fi, surprised.

"Yea," replied a helljumper, "Blend in perfectly with their surroundings." Darman searched the ground below with his rocket launcher, trying to see any. He stopped when he saw two little blue hovering dots coming towards him.

"Get down!" he called, firing a rocket. It hit right at the elites feet, sending him flying backwards.

"Get him?" asked the Chief.

"Yeah," replied Darman, trying to peer through the smoke, "Don't see hiâ€¦ Fierfek!"

An elite jumped out through the smoke, taking a hit at Darman with its energy sword. He ducked down and jumped backwards out of its range. They all started shooting at it, getting it away from Darman. Just then Atin noticed something,

"Where'd the Chief go?" Suddenly through the smoke the Chief leaped out holding a plasma sword. The elite heard him and turned around, letting out a cry of surprise. But before it could do anything the Chief ran the sword right through his chest, then ripped it out. The elite fell forward, clearly dead.

"Chief," said Darman, breathing heavily, "I owe you one."

"You alright?" he asked, ignoring the comment.

"Yeah," he said while the Chief helped him up, "That thing just came out of nowhere."

"There might be more though," put in a helljumper.

"Darman, I don't think I've heard you say fierfek this much in such a short period of time before," said Fi.

"What can I say?" he replied, "It gets to you after a while."

"What is fierfek anyway?" asked the Chief.

"Just a swear word we use," replied Atin.

"That's what I thought," said the helljumper, "Since I've heard you guys say it when we would say shit or damn." Just then Johnson's voice cam over the COM, "They gone yet?"

"I think so," said the Chief, "We had a couple run-ins with camouflaged elites, but I think they might be dead."

"Better make sure," replied Johnson.

"Doing it now," he said then shut off the COM link, addressing the others, "Let's make sure they're gone." They walked down to the ground and out of the overhanging, keeping their guns at bay.

* * *

>The last elite stood up on time of the overhang, waiting to be able to pounce on one. He saw one of the commandos come out, it being unaware of his position. He waited for the right moment, and when it came he leaped.<hr>Atin walked out the front while the others went the side ways, and the helljumpers stayed inside to cover their wounded. When he was clear of the overhang he felt something heavy land on his back and he rolled forward and off the edge down five feet to the ground. The elite who had landed on him had the advantage and knocked his gun away trying to pin Atin. But before he could he brought out his vibro blade and cut the elite across the face, splashing purple blood over his armor.

The elite yelled in pain having lost one of his eyes but it had not been deep enough to slow it down, it made him actually mad and stronger. He hit Atin's hands away and went for his neck, choking him. His shields were completely gone and he had no way to fend off the elite, who was as strong as he was. He tried to call out to the others, but the elite's grip cut him off.

"Atin? Atin! Where'd you go?" he heard Darman call. Atin couldn't call back, and he desperately tried to pull the elite's hand from his neck.

"Atin, where are you?" called Fi. He felt himself getting weaker, and he saw the elite grin as he noticed it too.

"Atin!" His vision was blurring, he could only make out the elite in front of him.

"Die now, human," whispered the elite, making his grip stronger. Atin knew he was dying, and he gave out one last feeble struggle before he passed out.

* * *

"Atin!" Fi called, walking around to the front, "I don't get it he was just here." <p>"Something's wrong," said Darman, "There's no way he wouldn't just not answer us."<p>

"Hurry up, look around," said the Chief, "He's in trouble."

Fi got a horrible feeling in his stomach, hoping Atin was okay. He sprinted down the path to below the edge, thinking maybe Atin fell. But what he saw made him freeze.

The elite was on top of Atin, choking him. He saw Atin struggling but he was weak and then his arms fell to the side, limp.

"ATIN!" he yelled, leaping forward and hitting the elite off of him. It rolled and leaped to his feet, ready to fight. Fi didn't hesitate and he jumped at him, trying to hit him over the head with his battle rifle. The elite blocked it, punching him in the stomach. His shield took the brunt of the blow, but he still doubled over. The elite elbowed him in the back of the head and fell down to his stomach.

"Pathetic human," he said, taking out a plasma sword. He brought his sword up to strike, and Fi tensed himself. As soon as he swung it, he leaped back. But the sword still hit him across the shoulder, cutting right through his armor and to the skin. He yelled in pain and fell over, but soon scrambled up, not letting the elite attack him while he was down.

"Fi! Duck!" he heard someone yell and he did. The elite looked at him curiously but then a bullet went right through his head, going out the back. Fi looked up towards the building and saw the Chief with a covenant sniper standing on the overhang. He nodded to him but then remembered Atin. He got up and ran over to him, kneeling down beside him. He removed Atin's helmet just as Darman sprinted down and knelt on Atin's other side.

"What happened?" he asked.

"The elite," replied Fi, setting his helmet off to the side. Atin's eyes were closed and he looked as pale as a ghost, making his scar on his face stand out, but when Fi put his head to his chest he heard him still breathing. It was weak, but he was still breathing.

"Johnson," they heard Chief say over the COM link, "All clear."

"Okay, comin' in now," Johnson said back. They then heard a familiar voice.

"Chief," Boss said, "Boss here. What's your status?"

"We've got three wounded, but we've cleaned out the landing zone."

"Who's the wounded?"

"A helljumper," replied the Chief, "and Atin and Fi." There was a pause then Boss asked,

"Are they alright?"

"Fi's alright, he was hit across the shoulder from a plasma sword, but Atin and the helljumper are unconscious. They should make it though. How is it over there?"

"We've got absolutely nothing," said Boss, "We haven't had any contact with hostiles."

"Okay, keep me updated," said the Chief.

"Will do," he replied, "Boss over and out."

* * *

>Author's note**: Yeah, finally got the Arbiter in there and yes was updated a lot more quickly than usual. I think I've got this story planned all the way up to the end, but just need to add in details and everything. So other than please read and review!

19. Difficult Road Ahead

Author's note: What do you think?

Warrior: I've already got the first part planned, but with the Chief helping the rebellion you are very close to what I'm doing.

Delta Operator: Yeah, I know about the beam rifle but I got so used to calling it the covenant sniper I guess I never bothered to correct myself. And all I'll tell you is that yes there will be jedi in the story.

Drakedragon:I'll get to explaining everything, just now that I've got the Arbiter I have to keep track of a lot of people, but I'll try to

not let that get in the way. And I think the colors might change cause when I played it there was a two brown elites and a white one. Other than that, thanks for the review!

Sniperwithashotgun: All I'll say is that the galactic civil war will be involved and the Chief will be there, but I won't give too much away.

Firefox116: I have call of duty 2 but haven't gotten that book yet. I do plan on buying it soon though.

Well, sorry for a sort of long update, but you gotta admit its better than two months. This chapter really revolves around the two groups heading towards the temple. No Grievous, no Arbiter, and a lot of action. So enjoy!

* * *

>Difficult Road Ahead

As Boss shut off the COM link he said, "Look's like their landing wasn't as good as ours."

"Why? What happened?" asked Adams.

"Fi and Atin are already wounded and they haven't even left the drop zone."

"I think we know where all the Covenant forces are," said Fixer, "Beating the hell out of them."

"Do they need help?" asked Kelly.

"No," replied Boss, "They were able to hold their own, now they're just waiting for Johnson to come in. But we shouldn't worry about them and keep moving." They followed him down the path, guns at he ready now that they heard what happened to the others.

"How'd they get hurt?" asked Scorch.

"The Chief only said that Fi was hit from an energy sword," he replied, "He said that Atin and the helljumper were unconscious but he didn't say what happened."

"You think it might've been from the landing?" asked Kelly.

"It might've been," said Adams, "Helljumpers have been known to die in the landing but I think Atin's armor would've protected him."

"We won't know until we see them," replied Boss, then said to Sev and Scorch, "You two scout ahead, make sure we don't run into any Covenant."

"Aye aye, Boss," said Scorch and he jogged ahead with Sev.

"You think that was a good idea," asked Fixer, "Sending those two ahead together?"

"They work well together," said Boss, "Only thing they get heated up about is how many kills they have." They walked on in silence for

another five minutes when Sev's voice came over the COM link,

"Boss, we've got trouble."

"What is it?" he asked.

"We've got a wraith patrolling up ahead," he replied, "And some levitating vehicles, don't know what they're called."

"Ghosts," said Kelly, helping him out.

"Yeah, those."

"Don't let yourselves be seen," said Adams, "Find some cover till we catch up to you."

"Okay," said Sev, "There are a few trees by here." Boss and the others quickened their pace to catch up with them. When they got there, they saw Sev and Scorch hunkered down behind some trees and they joined them.

"What are those things?" asked Scorch, looking around the tree at the wraith.

"I forgot," said Sev, "You weren't there when that thing was shooting balls of plasma at us."

"Sorry the Chief and I were being hunted down by Grievous," he replied sarcastically.

"Listen up," Boss cut them off, "How are we going to get rid of those?"

"Rockets," replied Kelly, "It's all we got."

"Allow me," said Scorch, taking out his rocket launcher and starting to move from cover.

"No!" said Kelly, grabbing his shoulder and forcing him back down, "We've got to distract the ghosts first, then you can move out and fire on the tank. If they see you with the rockets you'll become a primary target."

"I bet I could distract the ghost," said Sev thoughtfully, looking at the three ghosts patrolling around the wraith, "Does it matter if I end up killing 'em?"

"'Course not," she replied, "If you get a chance to, do it."

"Well then, allow me," he said, grabbing his sniper.

"I bet I still get more kills than him," he muttered.

"Just stay under cover until we've got the ghosts nicely distracted," said Kelly, "It will most likely take more than one shot to take it out though."

"Got it," he said, "Not a one shot one kill scenario." She nodded and moved out with the rest to help distract the ghosts. Sev was already crouched down, aiming for one of the elites in the ghost. He fired

and hit the elite in the head, causing him to fall off.

"Got one," he announced.

"Nice shot," said Adams. By then the two other ghosts and the wraith had seen them and started firing.

"Watch out!" yelled Fixer as a ball of plasma from the wraith came hurtling towards them. They all dove out of the way, and where they had been there was now a huge crater. Boss turned to yell at Scorch to take it out, but he already saw him creeping up aiming his rocket launcher. He fired off one, the rocket launcher lurching from the recoil. The rocket headed straight for the Wraith, nailing it, but now the wraith knew where he was and fired. Scorch held his ground and fired off the second rocket, which again headed straight for it and hitting it, this time causing it to explode. But now the wraith's plasma was heading right for Scorch.

"Scorch! Move!" yelled Boss, but the plasma came down on him. Boss ran over to him and when all the dust and smoke cleared he saw Scorch propped up on his elbow, holding his head. Boss grinned and walked over to him to help him up, "You're one lucky commando."

"Not really," he said, getting up with Boss's help, "Shield saved my life."

"You alright?" asked Sev, walking over and hitting him on the shoulder.

"Yeah, fine."

"Well, then I won't feel bad to say I'm beating you right now," he replied, "Three kills," and he gestured to the empty ghosts in the clearing.

"A tank has got to count as more than one kill," he said, grabbing his rocket launcher, "Like five."

"Oh don't give me that, I'm beating you fair and square."

"Don't start already!" Fixer cut in, "We've barely begun the mission!"

* * *

>The Master Chief ramped off of a hill in the warthog he was in, surprising the covenant forces below. Darman, who was in the passenger seat, aimed at one of the turrets there with his rocket launcher and blew it up, causing the grunt to go flying.<p><p>

"Chief!" he heard Cortana say, "Wraiths on the far side!" The moment after she said that the bridge that led to the other side retracted into the building, leaving the pass uncrossable.

"Of course," said Fi from the back, who was operating the turret with one hand since they needed Darman's rockets in the passenger seat, "They're scared of us."

"Cortana?" asked the Chief, "How do we get it back down."

"There's a control panel inside the building, you can activate it from there," she replied, "But there's Covenant guarding it so be careful."

"I'll do it," Darman spoke up, "Just drop me off by the door." The Chief U-turned and stopped in front of the door. Darman hopped out and took out his battle rifle, knowing his rocket launcher wouldn't do anything once he was inside. He crept forward, looking out for any Covenant that would sneak up on him. He dragged his foot forward and winced as it hit a rock, causing it to roll into the room.

"Someone's coming!" he heard a grunt yell, "Hide!"

"Stay where you are!" an elite ordered, and Darman flattened himself against the wall. He braced himself, knowing well enough that the elite he had heard would most likely come to see what had hit the rock. He decided to catch them off guard while he still had the chance. He pulled out a frag, armed it, and threw it.

"Grenade!" screamed a grunt, only to be followed by a BOOM and a yell from a few grunts and an elite at once. It remained silent for a moment, had he gotten all of them? But a red elite jumped through the door, yelling in fury. Darman brought up his arm to block the elites swing and kicked him in the stomach, sending the elite into the wall. The kick barely affected him as he sprung onto Darman, knocking him down.

"You guys like knocking people down, don't you?" Without waiting for an answer, he armed another grenade and stuck it into the elite's mouth. He only had a few seconds to get away, throwing the elite off of him and running down the hallway and covered his head as the grenade went off, sending blood and elite parts everywhere. He looked over and saw nothing but the legs remaining.

"That was a little messy," he muttered, and then remembering that the bridge still needed to be lowered ran inside. Four grunts and an elite lay on the ground, killed by his previous grenade. He found the control panel and activated it, causing the bridge to crawl towards the opposite side. He then made his way outside, where the Chief and Fi were waiting in the warthog.

"Wow, Darman, what'd you do?" asked Fi, looking over his armor. Darman looked down and saw that there was elite blood all over his armor, leaving purple splotches everywhere.

"Well, just ran into a little trouble," he said.

"Good to know you put him down nice and neat," Fi replied sarcastically, laughing.

"Just forget it and let's go," said Darman, leaping into the passenger seat.

"Good, you got the bridge down," said Cortana, noticing the bridge attaching to the other side, "Now about those Wraithsâ€¦"

"Roger that," they heard Johnson over the COM link, "Armor's on the way." And sure enough they looked up and a pelican came over the

horizon, carrying what looked like to be a tank.

"Darman," said the Chief, "Take the wheel."

"What?" he replied, caught off guard, "I don't know how to drive this thing!"

"I need to drive the tank," the Chief answered, getting out and pointing out what he needed, "All you need to know are the pedals and wheel. That pedal goes and that one stops," he said, pointing to each one in turn. "And, obviously," he said, getting into the tank, "The wheel is used for turning."

"Darman, three words," said Fi from the back while Darman got in the driver's seat, "Watch the road."

"Shut up, Fi," replied Darman.

"Okay, head out in front," said the Chief over the COM, "And distract the Wraiths and take out any Ghosts that come out. I'll take care of the Wraiths."

"Ghosts?" asked Darman.

"You'll know them when you see 'em," he replied, "Now let's go." Darman put his foot on the pedal and they went forward, crossing the bridge with the Chief following close behind.

"Don't go too close to the Wraiths," the Chief said, "Since they'll be blowing up in a little bit."

"Yeah, you won't have to worry about that," said Darman, trying to keep control of the wheel. He sped across the bridge and right in between the two Wraiths while Fi shot the turret, switching back and forth between the two. Just when Darman thought they had it under control two vehicles, which he assumed were Ghosts, sped out of a nearby tunnel.

"Fi!" he yelled, "Two o'clock!" Fi turned his turret toward the spot and saw the two ghosts,

"I see them!" he yelled back, opening fire. The Ghosts boosted out of range, then turned and opened fire.

"Ah, fierfek!" shouted Darman, veering to dodge the plasma coming.

"Don't worry," said Fi, "I've got us covered." He kept the turret firing, trying to keep them from returning fire.

"Don't let them stop!" yelled the Chief over the COM link, "When they boost they can't fire!"

"Now you tell me!" Fi yelled back, not stopping. He kept the turret trained on one of the Ghosts, not letting it even slow down. The elite driving the Ghost yelled in rage, and then in pain as the Ghost exploded, sending flaming hot pieces of metal into him. Fi didn't waste a second and switched to the other Ghost, who was charging right at them. The turret's bullets drove into the front of the Ghost, nailing the tank and exploding. But the elite was smarter than

the other, and bailed just before hand. Darman drove by and the elite leaped onto the back of the Warthog, getting a firm hold.

"Uh oh," said Darman and took a hard turn to try to throw off the elite. But the elite had a strong hold and reached up and grabbed Fi's injured arm, causing them to both fall off.

"Fi!" yelled Darman, looking back to see if he was ok. He turned back around and noticed he was heading right for the cliff edge.

"Oh damn!" he yelled, and made a U-turn, the back wheels barely touching the edge. He gave a sigh of relief, but then remembered that Fi needed his help and pressed the pedal and moved forward. He saw Fi and the elite fighting hand-to-hand, guns lying forgotten. He then got an idea, "Fi, jumps backwards!" When Fi heard that he looked up and saw Darman heading right towards him, he didn't hesitate in jumping backwards. The elite, however, didn't notice until the last second where he turned his head and let out a cry of surprise, only to be bowled over by Darman and the Warthog. He slammed on the breaks and yelled,

"You owe me one!"

Fi sprinted forward and leaped into the turret and replied, "I could handle it."

"Yeah, sure," he said, going forward and turning, "Let's see if the Chief needs help."

* * *

>"Grenade!" yelled Boss, and everyone dove for cover as the plasma grenade went off. Boss and Scorch were hiding behind one block, popping their heads up every once in a while to take a shot while Kelly, Adams, and Fixer took a spot along the left side behind another block. Sev was back up a ways, sniping any Covenant that poked their heads out. But unfortunately he couldn't keep up with all the Covenant they had met up with. Right now they were pinned down, having met an enemy patrol in the small structure. They had been able to call reinforcements, and now they were outnumbered by at least 3 to 1. Boss popped up again and shot a grunt in the head with his battle rifle, but was forced to take cover again when an elite shot at him with its plasma rifle. Boss laid his back against the block and took a quick rest.<p><p>

"We're gonna be stuck here for a while, Boss," said Scorch who was kneeling beside him.

"Make that a _long _time," said Kelly, "Look."

Scorch looked first and said, "Oh great, just what we need." Boss, not wanting to look but forced himself too, reached his head above the top and looked.

"Why this?" groaned Boss. Two hunters had appeared from behind the structure, shields raised and fuel rod guns leveled toward the soldiers hiding in the rubble.

"Sev! Take cover!" yelled Boss.

"Wait," he replied, "I've got a good shot." One of the hunters spotted him up on the ridge and fired towards him. Boss saw Sev dive behind a ledge and where he just was there was a black spot.

"Sev, you alright?" asked Boss.

"Yeah, it missed me," he replied.

"Keep your head down," said Boss sternly, "We can't afford to lose anybody."

"Can do, sir."

"Scorch?"

"Yeah, Boss?" he asked, pausing in his shooting.

"You got any rockets left?"

"I've only got one, sir."

"Then now would be a good time to use it," he replied.

"Good idea," he said, grabbing the rocket launcher off of his back then yelled, "Everybody hit the dirt!" With that everyone ducked down and Scorch shot a rocket at the hunter's feet, sending pebbles and dirt everywhere. When the smoke cleared they saw that one of the hunters had been killed, but the other one was still standing. He raised his arm and shot at Scorch, who dove down and yelled, "Damn! I can't believe I missed him!"

"Just stay down!" Boss said back, "He knows where you are!"

"We need to get them to turn around!" yelled Adams.

"I remember, they don't have armor on their backs," said Sev, "If you could get them turned around I'd have a shot."

"Let me do it," Kelly said, "I've probably had more experience with hunters since the Chief and I and the rest of our squad were the first to encounter them."

"You'll get fried!" said Fixer, "Their guns are too fast!"

"You haven't seen me yet," she replied, and crouched and walked toward the side of the block. When the hunter shot again and had to let its gun cool down, she sprinted up the left side and out of sight.

"Damn she's fast," said Scorch. Suddenly, battle rifle rounds could be heard from behind the hunter and it turned around, firing.

"Sev, now!" yelled Boss, but he had already leaped from cover, aiming. A second later, the bullet went past Boss's head and into the back of the hunter, killing it. It fell forward, revealing Kelly standing over dead elites and grunts.

"The hunter had a little case of team killing," she said, gesturing to the burnt bodies.

"That's good in our case," said Adams, moving out from behind the block, "Hell of a lot better than dealing with them personally."

"I agree completely with that," said a voice from behind a pillar.

* * *

>Author's note:** Okay, I'm saying this now; don't ask me who the person is at the end, I won't tell you. But nothing too new really happened in this chapter, but next chapter new things WILL happen. Review please!

20. Fire in the Hole!

Author's Note: Replies to reviews. And new people, I just respond to reviews with questions, suggestions, and constructive criticism.

RC 1205 Shade: Glad to hear your feeling better, I've been feeling a little sick myself. And have been constantly reading Triple Zero :-)

Darth Red: Actually, I was already using one of your ideas in this chapter, and thanks for reviewing.

Alex Donnelley: Thanks for the review, and I haven't played that game, I don't even have a 360 which sucks. But Kelly came from the Halo books.

Okay, sorry for another long update but I've been sick and I've been distracted by reading Triple Zero, which is friekin awesome. But most of you are going to skip this note since you want to figure out who the person is so be on your way, except I want to tell you that the person is NOT Obi-wan. Sorry if this disappoints anybody.

* * *

>Fire in the Hole!

"Come out," ordered Kelly, "Unarmed." Everyone had their battle rifles raised and aimed at the pillar, except for Sev and Scorch. Sev had his sniper while Scorch had his rocket launcher.

"Uh, Scorch, your rocket's out of ammo," Adams pointed.

"So?" asked Scorch, "He doesn't know that." Adams gave a silent _oh_ and aimed his rifle.

"You promise your not going to shoot me?" the voice asked again, clearly a males voice, "wouldn't put it past Sev." Boss shook his head, he knew this voice, and obviously the man knew him and his squad.

"Who are you?" asked Boss.

"You don't recognize an old friends voice?" he asked, "Sure you haven't seen me for a while, but I'm sure time hasn't clouded your memory."

"We asked who you are," said Kelly in a fierce tone, "We'll blow the pillar if you don't come out."

"Got used to a girl giving you orders, eh Boss?" he asked, "Ever since we worked with Etain I'm sure it stuck with you." _We?_ Boss then put the pieces together and called out,

"Okay, game's over, I figured it out," Boss paused then said, "Come out, Ordo." Just then, an ARC trooper stepped out from behind the pillar, two blaster holsters at his side hanging over the traditional _kama_ that ARCs usually wore.

"That's Captain Ordo to you," he said, "I was beginning to think that you didn't remember me."

"What are you doing here?" asked Scorch as Sev jogged down the path to join them, "Actually, how did you _get _here?"

"To answer your first question, we were sent here by General Kenobi when Omega disappeared without a word."

"We?" asked Fixer.

"Yes, we," said a voice from behind them. They all spun around but froze when they saw who it was.

"Sarge?" asked Boss, amazed. Kal Skirata stood there, grinning at seeing his boys again.

"I can't believe this," said Scorch, "How can you _both_ be here?"

"How did you survive?" asked Fixer.

"Survive what?" asked Ordo, "The base? Those droids were nothing. Wiped out all 50 of em."

"What about Grievous?" asked Boss.

"What about him?"

"He wasn't there?"

"No, he wasn't," said Kal, "All we saw were droids, which are laying in a pile of broken parts now. Why, is he here?"

"Yeah, he was," said Scorch, "We've been having a few problems with him."

"But he's dead," said Ordo, confused, "General Kenobi killed him."

"What?"

"You boys were gone," said Kal, "They found him on Utapau and killed him."

"That doesn't make any sense," said Boss, thinking, "He's here, there's no way he could've died."

"He did, son," replied Kal, "He blew up and everything. You sure it's him?"

"Oh yeah," said Scorch, "Try looking at my leg, a reminder of a friendly meeting with the cyborg." Boss glanced down and noticed there was still a black gash across the back of his leg even though his armor was patched up.

Kal's eyes clouded with concern, "Are you alright?"

"Yeah, nicely healed now, Sarge." Kal Skirata had a father son relationship with the clones he trained. Even though Delta Squad wasn't part of his, he still treats them as his sons' cause of the way Walon Vau had treated them.

"Is Omega here?" asked Ordo.

"Yes, they're with the Chief," answered Boss, "Well, Fi and Darman are."

"Where's Niner and Atin?" asked Kal.

"Niner had a run-in with about ten SBDs and got a little beat up," said Boss, "But he's healing now."

"What about Atin?" Kal asked, not satisfied with his answer.

"Weâ€¦ don't know," he replied, "Last we heard of him he was unconscious."

"Why what happened?"

"Don't know that either, Sarge," said Fixer, "That's all we heard of him." Kal sank into thought but Kelly cut in,

"Hate to break up the reunion but we've still got to hunt Regret."

"Yeah, Chief's probably close by now," said Scorch.

"Who are you two?" asked Ordo.

"Kelly and he's Adams," she replied shortly, "Now can we go?"

"What's the hurry?" asked Kal.

"We'll explain on the way," said Boss, "But we should go, I'll contact the Chief to tell him we found some more friends."

* * *

>"There's no way I'm jumping down," said Darman, peering over the edge of the waterfall.<p><p>

"How else are we going to get down?" asked Fi, "Climb?"

"Better than jumping," muttered Darman.

"We're going to have too," said the Chief, "No other way." Just then

a sniper beam went right in front of Fi's face,

"Holy!" he yelled, jumping back. Darman and the Chief raised their battle rifles and shot the jackal, causing it to fly backwards. Just then a low buzzing could be heard over the waterfall.

"Jump and find cover!" yelled the Chief, and he jumped down closely followed by Fi.

"Typical," said Darman, jumping down after them.

They landed and bent their knees to absorb the shock. Remembering the Chief's words he dove behind a block that was sticking crooked out of the water, wondering what and where the enemies were coming from.

"What are we hiding from?" asked Darman.

"Bugs."

"Are you serious?" asked Fi, "There are bugs here too? I thought we had left them behind."

"They're coming in from the north," announced the Chief and sure enough when Darman looked out from his cover, he saw about eight or more flying bugs coming in over the cliff edge. He lifted his battle rifle and fired, hitting a bug in the head, causing it to fall.

"Nice shot, Dar," called Fi, and lifted his own rifle to fire at the oncoming hoard.

"Just keep firing," said the Chief, "It's easier when they land."

"I've always liked a moving target," said Fi. Darman took cover again while he reloaded and then continued firing.

In about five minutes all the bugs lay on the ground, dead.

"That was easier than I thought it would be," said Fi, creeping out from cover.

"Heads up!" called Darman, and he shot a jackal sniper on the ledge above Fi, who had been aiming straight down at him.

"Nice call," said Fi as the jackal rolled off the edge and landed right in front of him. Two more sniper beams went by them and Fi said, "Here we go."

* * *

>The Chief repeatedly popped out of his cover, shooting at the jackals. Just then Boss came in over the COM link,<p><p>

"Chief, Boss here, where are you?"

"We just jumped off a waterfall," he replied, "We're pinned down by some jackal snipers but should soon be moving again."

"Can you see the temple from where you're at?"

"No, we're in a small valley right now."

"Alright, but you're mostly likely closer now since we got a little held up."

"What happened?"

"Met some old friends," Boss said, "You won't know 'em, but Darman and Fi will." The commandos, who were listening in on the conversation, asked,

"Why, who is it?"

"Kal Skirata and Ordo." They both froze in mid-fire, not believing what they heard, than Fi said,

"You have _got_ to be kidding me."

"Why Fi," said Ordo into the COM, "You didn't miss me?"

"Oh, wow, he's really here," said Fi.

"You seem surprised," he said.

"Well, come on, we haven't seen each other for years," replied Fi, "Then you just pop up with us in a completely different galaxy. Yeah, I'm just a little surprised."

"Completely different galaxy?" Ordo asked.

"We'll explain later," Boss cut-in, "Chief, you'll probably be able to see the temple when you get out of the valley."

"I'll let you know when I see it," he said, "Chief out."

* * *

>"Follow me, General." Grievous turned to see one of the elites standing there. In his hunched over state he was about as tall as the alien, but he knew standing up he'd be a good foot taller. "I will take you to the prophets." Grievous narrowed his eyes but went to follow him, motioning to his guards to come with. The alien led him down corridor after corridor until they reached a door.<p><p>

"This is the bridge," he said, "Two of the three Prophets are here. The third is on a special mission." The alien gestured to the door and Grievous walked forward and the door opened, showing him the bridge. It had windows showing space, which was empty now because of the jump. Towards the window he saw the two Prophets, and the one he recognized as Truth spoke,

"Welcome, General, to High Charity. This is the Covenant base, where we generally operate from."

"Where is the third?" asked Grievous.

"He is on a mission that is not important to you right now," the other Prophet replied, but Truth cut him off and said,

"Of course it is important to him, Mercy. He is on our side now, so he must know our operations." He turned to Grievous and said, "The Prophet of Regret is currently at Delta Halo, protecting it from the Demon and your commandos. From our recent reports he seems to be doing a horrible job." The bitterness he heard toward Regret made it seem that Truth and Mercy were upset with something he had done.

"What has he done to upset you?" Truth looked at him then replied,

"Now I see why you were made General, but Regret attacked the human base with too small a fleet, so when he reached their planet, the Demon held them off." He paused, and then said, "Your commandos were there too, but there had only been four. When we realized Regret would not win we demanded he retreat to Delta Halo and protect it. We thought it a simple job, since the humans had not yet found it. But of course one of the human's ships jumped with Regret's, leading them right to it. Now, the Demon and the commandos are heading right for Regret."

"Do you plan on helping him?" asked Grievous cautiously.

Truth grinned and said, "We plan on using him General, and that's where you come in."

"What do you need me for?"

"Well, when they reach Regret's temple, they'll charge right in and take him, dead or alive. When they do, we'll blow the temple, taking everyone inside. We need you to lead a fleet and to take out the temple."

"You trust me with a fleet already?" he asked.

"We have seen you fight," replied Truth, "And you would not be General if you had not known how to fight in space. We trust you enough, but if you plan on turning your backs on us we will have honor elites on your ship standing by, ready to take you down."

Grievous snorted, knowing that these elites would not be able to take him, but nodded anyway and said, "I'll do it."

"Great," said Truth, "Your ship is waiting for you in the hangar." When he finished the sentence, Grievous felt the lurch of the ship and saw that they had arrived at Delta Halo. He turned and walked away, not bothering to be dismissed but Truth called to him, "And remember, we do not care of what happens to Regret. He must be punished."

* * *

>Chief, Darman and Fi made their way into the structure after taking a gondola. The structure was possibly the one that held Regret, but they had their doubts, since a little farther out into the lake there was another, bigger one.<p><p>

"You think this is it?" asked Darman.

"I don't know," Chief said, reloading his shotgun he had picked up, "Only one way to find out." He led the way in, heading through a small entryway and then into a larger room with paths heading up and out of the structure. In the middle there was a large hole. The Chief was about to investigate when a few jackals popped out, blocking his way. One let off a charged up shot which nailed the Chief in the chest, completely taking his shield down. Darman and Fi moved up to his shoulders, firing at the jackals with their own battle rifles while Chief took cover. Once his shields recharged he leaped back out to help them finish off them off. He leaped at one and kicked aside its shield, leaving it open for Darman to shoot in the head. Fi was able to get a shot into the slots on the side of the shields, throwing it backwards where he finished it off. The three of them ganged up on the last jackal and in no time it was on the ground with its comrades, dead.

Just then a low buzzing let them know of the oncoming drones coming in from the roof. They all raised their guns, two battle rifles and a shotgun, up towards the roof where they fired at the drones. Soon they too lay on the ground dead.

"Check this place out and make sure there's no Covenant hiding," said the Chief, and they all spread out. The Chief headed towards the hole, Fi to the back of the room, and Darman took the pathways up to the ceiling. The Chief heard a gun shot and then Darman said,

"What is _that?_" The Chief ran up there to see a dead grunt lying on the ground and beside him a gun.

"Fuel Rod gun," replied the Chief, "We're lucky that grunt wasn't awake to use it."

"I'm taking this," he said and bent down to pick it up. He shouldered it while the Chief said,

"Don't fire it too close, you'll blow yourself up."

"Hey, I think we've got reinforcements coming," Fi called up to them.

"You think?" asked Darman, him and the Chief heading down to the floor.

"An elevator is coming up the hole, it might hold reinforcements."

"Alright, surround it. It's most likely just holding more jackals." Darman and the Chief came down and with Fi surrounded the hole. When the elevator came up the doors opened to Darman and Chief's side while Fi had to run around to help them. There were only a few jackals so they dispatched of them quickly and decided to get in the elevator. It led down into the lake, traveling in the water until it rose up again into another structure. They continued on, fighting patrol after patrol of Covenant. Finally, they made it to the gondola that took them to the temple.

"Boss, Chief here, you receiving?"

"Boss here," he replied, "Can you see the temple?"

"Yes, we're right across from it. We just have to take a gondola across the lake to get too it."

"We've got the temple in sight too, but we're far from it to do any good. You might as well go in without us, it'll take too long if you wait."

"Alright, we're heading in now, Chief out," and he shut off the COM link.

"Well, let's go then," said Darman and they headed towards the gondola. Last time there had been Covenant guarding it, but now there was nobody here.

"This can't be good," said Fi, thinking the same thing, "We should be in a huge firefight."

"Here are some weapons," said the Chief, noticing some pods, "Grab what you can, we'll need it." The Chief grabbed a rocket launcher, just in case he needed it for Regret and some shotgun rounds. Fi grabbed a sniper and they all grabbed ammo for their battle rifles. Darman, who still had the Fuel Rod fun strapped across his back, walked onto the gondola and said,

"Let's get this over with." Chief and Fi got on and Darman hit the button in the front and the gondola started forward. They were about a quarter of the way there when the Chief noticed two banshees coming in from behind them.

"Heads up!" yelled the Chief and he brought out his rocket launcher to fire at the first banshee which was firing at them. But Darman had brought out his Fuel Rod gun and shot, hitting the banshee's wing, blowing it off. The banshee wavered, trying to keep steady but was put to an end when the Chief fired a rocket.

"Nice shot," said the Chief, "and you didn't have to lock on."

"Was that a joke, Chief?" asked Fi. The Chief didn't answer and locked on to the banshee. The rocket hit it head on, causing it to plummet into the lake.

"Heads up we've got some snipers coming out," said Fi, kneeling down and looking down the scope. He fired two shots and said, "Not anymore." When the gondola was close, two grunts in turrets opened fire on them. Darman fired another round of the Fuel Rod and nailed one, while the Chief was able to stick the second one with a plasma grenade. Just then the Chief looked up and there were many Slipspace ruptures and a whole Covenant fleet came out of Slipspace.

"That's the largest Covenant fleet I've ever seen, the largest anyone's ever seen," said Cortana in awe, "Get inside the temple and kill Regret before it can stop us."

The Chief nodded and sprinted into the temple with a new sense of urgency with Fi and Darman behind him.

* * *

>"Have you found him yet?" asked Grievous, aboard the Covenant ship.

They were above the temple having just arrived out of Slipspace they called it.<p><p>

"Yes, sir," said an elite at one of the consoles on the bridge, "The Demon and two commandos are heading into the temple as we speak."

"Charge cannons and wait for my mark to fire."

"Yes, sir."

* * *

>"Chief, it's Boss, you've got a lot of Covenant ships above you and they look about to fire. I'd get out of there."<p><p>

"You think we haven't noticed?" asked Darman, who just shot an honor elite, making him fall over backwards.

"We're almost to Regret," said the Chief, "We'll kill him and get out of here."

"I'd hurry." The Chief ran forward through a door, only to walk into the biggest room yet. And at the back of the room, sitting in his hover throne, was Regret.

"How did you find this place?" yelled Regret with a hint of fear in his voice, "Kill the Demon, don't let that vermin near me!"

"Come on, Chief, you gonna take that?" asked Fi, firing at a couple of grunts. The Chief immediately took out his rocket launcher and fired at Regret. It flew and nailed him, but when the smoke cleared he noticed Regret was unscathed.

"He's got shields!" yelled Darman.

The Chief thought quickly, then got an idea and yelled to the others, "Cover me!" He dropped the rocket launcher and sprinted forward. When he was close enough he sprang up and grabbed Regret's chair.

"What the fierfek is he doing?" asked Darman, but was cut off by Boss.

"Chief, get out of there now! The ships are about to fire!" The Chief ignored him and yelled to the commandos,

"Get out of here and get the gondola ready, I can handle this!"

"No way!" Darman yelled back, "We're not leaving you here."

"I'll be fine, go!" Darman figured it was pointless to argue back so he and Fi ran out, taking every Covenant bastard with him.

* * *

>"Sir, the commandos have run out but the Demon is still in the temple," the elite said to Grievous.<p><p>

"Fire!" he yelled, "Before he escapes too!"

"Sir, we're not done charging."

He knew he couldn't do anything about that, so he said, "Fire when ready!"

* * *

>The Chief raised his hand back and made a fist, punching Regret in the head. He yelled in pain and the Chief hit him again and again until he broke his skull, killing him instantly. Not bothering to stick around, he began to sprint out. But his stomach sank when he heard,<p><p>

"Chief! The gondola is starting on its own! Get out here now!" He made it outside, but he then realized he had no way to reach the gondola, it was too far away. He then did the next best thing.

He ran.

* * *

>"Where's he going?" asked Fi, seeing the Chief leap off the side.<p><p>

"He knows he can't make it. He's gonna jump in the lake!" Just then Darman looked up and noticed the ship was firing.

"Fi! Get down!" he yelled, and he pushed Fi to the bottom of the gondola just as the ship fired on the temple, throwing off a bright light.

"No!"

* * *

>Author's note**: Wow, now that was a fun chapter to write. Hope you guys enjoyed it as much as I enjoyed writing it. A little longer than the others, but I wanted to get Regret dead and done with since this mission has spanned over three chapters. Nothing else, please review!

21. Reunion

Author's note: Replies to reviews.

Bronx Shogun: Not in this chapter, but most likely in the next.

Victory MS: Yep, I read Triple Zero. And I agree a VERY good book.

Lecter42: Triple Zero kicked EXTREME ass. And with commandos at my side I may actually be able to beat halo 2 on legendary (don't make fun of me). And sorry can't answer that question; you'll just have to read on.

Alex Donnelley: Yep, can't tell ya, but your question about Grievous will be answered in this chapter.

RC 1205 Shade: Thanks, I'm a lot better now. But sorry Atin's not in this chapter, he'll be appearing shortly though.

Sniperwithashotgun: That would definitely work, WWII stories are awesome.

Iceman: Cause I don't want him too :-)

kal shukur: I'll explain that in this chapter

Alright, yes faster update than usual but that's cause I've been out of the country all last week in the Virgin Islands so I got lots of time to work on it then. Guess what though? More new characters! Yay! Okay, I'll stop, here's the chappy.

* * *

>Reunion

"Get down!" yelled Boss as the Covenant ship opened fire. They all ducked down behind the wall they had been looking over to see the temple. The Covenant beam came down, emitting an explosion followed by a bright flash of light. The wall plus Boss's helmet help shielded him against the light, but he couldn't imagine how it looked for Adams or Kal, who neither had helmets. Slowly the light faded and they rose their heads up to see the damage.

The temple was completely gone, evaporated by the beam. The gondola that had escaped had lost its entire back, but the rest was intact and still moving slowly towards the other side.

"Chief, are you receiving?" Boss asked into the COM link, but the only answer was static.

He then tried Darman, who answered wearily, "Yeah, I'm here."

"Are you alright?"

"Yeah a little shaken up by the blast," he managed a reply, "So is Fi, but other than that we're fine."

"And the Chief?" asked Boss, dreading the answer.

"We don't know," Darman replied, "He jumped off into the lake at the last second, but he's not answering his COM."

"Alright, we're coming down to meet you. Just stay put," and he shut off the COM link.

Boss and the rest of the group made it down to the gondola just as it reached land. Darman and Fi had a few burn marks on their armor but looked unscathed. Kal walked forward to meet them, hugging each of them in turn.

"You sure you're alright?" he asked.

"For being that close to the beam, I'd say never been better," replied Fi.

"Is there still no word on the Chief?" asked Kelly, her voice calm.

But Boss knew what she must be feeling right now, just as the Chief had felt when he thought a few days ago on the Republic dropship that he was the last surviving Spartan. She probably thought she was the last one, but they didn't know if the Chief was actually KIA or not.

"Nothing from him yet," replied Darman, "He could still be alive though. He was able to make it off the temple into the lake." Kelly nodded and didn't reply, obviously thinking to herself. After a moment she spoke her thoughts to them, "We need to get extracted and see what Commander Keyes wants us to do next. I'll try contacting Johnson."

"Johnson?" asked Ordo.

"Just a sergeant on the mission," explained Darman, "But what do you think we'll do next?"

"Who knows," said Adams, "It's the Commander's call, but I'm guessing it will have to do with the library."

"Library?" asked Boss.

"Yeah," he replied, "I wasn't there, but on the last Halo the Chief had to go through the library to get the index. It was used to activate Halo."

"So what do you think we'll have to do?" asked Fixer, "retrieve it?"

"At least secure it," said Adams, "if the Covenant haven't found it yet. Keyes might have already found it."

"He's coming to evac us in five minutes," Kelly interrupted, "Be ready."

"Wait!" yelled a voice from behind them. They all turned to see who had yelled it and they stared in shock at who it was.

It was a Spartan.

But it wasn't the Chief, it couldn't be the Chief. There was no way he could've made it all the way up here in that amount of time. Boss's question was answered when Kelly asked,

"Fred?"

"No time," he replied, running down the hill toward them. When he reached them he directly addressed Boss, which surprised them all. But what he asked him made them stare even more, "Are you from the Republic?"

It took him a moment to reply since he was so taken aback, but he answered, "Yes, but how-?"

"I'll explain everything later," he said, then asked, "Do you know about Order 66?"

"Yes, we were able to escape when it happened."

"I've got some more survivors from it," Fred said, "Will, Linda, and I have been caring for them. But the Covenant have launched an attack on us and we don't know how much longer we can hold them back."

"How did you know we were here?" asked Kelly.

"I saw the pods, so I at least knew there were some UNSC forces here. But we have to get back to help."

Kelly nodded, and then told Johnson, "Delay the evac, we've got a problem."

* * *

>As Grievous walked toward the bridge of what he learned was High Charity, he noticed elites standing by the path, holding a staff at the ready. They eyed him and his guards with hostility, obviously not trusting them. Grievous just glared back, not caring what they thought. When he reached the doors he told the MagnaGuards to wait for him and they immediately took positions on either side of the door. One of the elites standing by snorted but said nothing. Grievous walked in through the doors and saw that Truth and Mercy were alone.

"Welcome back, General," said Truth, "I hope the mission was a success?"

"From your point of view, yes," he replied, the continued grimly, "From mine, no."

"What happened?" asked Mercy.

"We were able to dispose of the Demon, but the commandos escaped."

"How unfortunate," said Truth, but Grievous knew he didn't mean it.

"I have solved your problem," Grievous said fiercely, "Now you help with mine."

"Yes, of course, after-" But Truth was unable to finish his sentence since Grievous had pulled out a lightsaber and was holding it to Truth's neck, causing all the elites in the room to ignite their energy swords.

"Not later," he said, "_Now._"

Truth tried to keep calm as he said, "You didn't let me finish my sentence, General. Listen first, and then act on it after you hear me out."

Grievous narrowed his eyes but turned off the lightsaber, reattaching it to his belt, "Go ahead."

"As I was saying, we have another problem that interferes with your own. Our patrols have found a group of people on Halo from both of our galaxies."

"How do you know there are people from mine?" he asked.

"There is a white armored figure that resembles the commandos very much, but has a different type of armor."

"He's a clone," he said to himself, then asked Truth, "You said 'people'?"

"Yes, I did. The patrols have started attacking, and they have identified the three other people with a word that is not known to me, but maybe to you." He paused, and then asked, "Does 'Jedi' sound familiar to you?"

Grievous stared at him, not able to say anything. It was impossible, all the Jedi were dead except possibly Kenobi and Yoda. But there was no way they were here, now.

"What did they look like?" he asked.

"All we have been able to identify is a male and a female; we haven't seen the third one so we're assuming he is wounded." That didn't help him, except now that there was a woman Jedi that they had missed.

"Send me," said Grievous, "I will go finish them off."

"That is what I was getting to. We have discovered that three more humans like the Demon are helping the Jedi. Our forces are pushing closer, but if they get too close the Jedi cut them down with weapons like yours. We know you can fight them."

"I'll do more than that," Grievous said, but was interrupted when an elite barged into the room, obviously furious but trying to keep it in check.

"Your holiness," he said, walking forward to stand beside Grievous, "I must speak with you."

"I told you to wait, Half-Jaw," said Truth, being patient but still annoyed. Grievous saw why he was called Half-Jaw; he only had two of his mandibles on one side of his face. With having the white armor and two elite guards walking at his shoulder, he figured he was also a high-ranking elite.

"The brutes replacing the elites is unheard of," he began.

"Special Operations is your concern, Half-Jaw," Truth said, "and I ask you to wait until I am done talking to the General here." He looked at Grievous, who looked back, staring him right in the eye. Half-Jaw's eyes were full of distrust, and Grievous figured none of the elites trusted him. But after what seemed like an eternity, Half-Jaw looked back at Truth and said,

"Yes, Holy One, I will wait." And with that he backed away and stood off to the side, letting them finish.

"Well, General, do what you want with the commandos but I want those three new arrivals dead."

"Consider it done," he replied and with one more glance at Half-Jaw, he left.

* * *

>"How much farther?" asked Boss. They were sprinting towards the spot where the survivors were being attacked. Fred hadn't mentioned their names so he didn't know who was there. He had heard Will and Linda, but Kelly had seemed to know who they were. Were they possibly more Spartans?<p><p>

"Not much longer," said Fred, leading them, "We were holed up in a structure. We'll be there in about three minutes." They ran for a couple more minutes until in the distance they heard gunfire, mostly Covenant weapons. But was that a blaster rifle he heard?

"We need to surround them from behind so they can't escape to get reinforcements."

"Right," said Boss, "Deltas, we'll head left. Sev, give us sniping cover."

"Me, Ordo, and Omega will head right," said Kal, "And Fi you can give us sniping cover since you're the only one that has a sniper."

"Okay, me, Kelly, and-" Fred paused, "What's your name?"

"Private Tony Adams," he replied.

"Wait," said Scorch, "you have a first name?"

Adams smiled but Boss cut him off, "Never mind that, lets go before something bad happens."

"Like Grievous," said Kelly.

"You saw him too?" asked Ordo.

"Yes," she replied, "Had a little run-in with him."

"Let's go then before he gets here," Fred said, then lead the way forward. When they got close they branched out with Delta Squad going left, Omega Squad, Kal, and Ordo going right, and Fred, Kelly, and Adams going straight in. When Boss got close enough to see the Covenant attack, he saw that Fred was right. The survivors were holed up in a structure on the far side of the plain completely surrounded by grunts, jackals, and a few elites. Luckily there were no hunters but they could be placed into the battle at any time. In the structure he would see someone pop off an occasional shot but nothing more.

"Sev set up. Scorch, Fixer, lets move out." Boss and the others took cover on the edge of the battle and he looked for where everyone else was at. He saw Ordo on the far side with the rest of his group taking cover, ready to attack. He then saw Fred, Kelly, and Adams in position. Fred looked at the Covenant for a bit, and then looked to Boss and Ordo, who nodded. He nodded back and gave them the move out signal.

"Let's party," said Boss and leaped from cover, firing his battle rifle while Scorch and Fixer did the same. Ordo and the rest of his

team leaped out at the same time, Ordo firing his dual blasters, Kal his blaster rifle, and Darman and Fi with their battle rifles. Fred and his team all had battle rifles, all firing at the Covenant party. They turned around in surprise, but that quickly vanished as they returned fire, causing them to take cover again. While he was firing Boss saw a flash of gold out of the corner of his eye and turned to see what it was. He saw a gold elite standing on the rock, shouting orders to the Covenant below in a language he didn't understand. It was obviously the commander.

"Sev!" yelled Boss, "Take out that gold elite!" Sev looked for the elite and when he found him aimed. A moment later he fired, hitting the elite in the head, but Boss realized that the shield had taken the blow. It whipped around, looking for the source of the shot. Sev fired again but he ducked. Roaring in anger it leaped off the rock and out of sight.

"Fierfek," Boss heard Sev say, "Got away."

"Grenade!" Boss looked to see Kelly throw a frag grenade into the middle of the group, blowing up a few grunts and jackals that weren't able to get away. Boss rose from cover and fired at a couple grunts nearby, hitting them in the head.

"Come on, we have to move forward!" Fred yelled. They all fired simultaneously, falling many grunts and jackals and a few elites.

"Sev! Duck!" Boss turned to see the same golden elite as before standing over Sev with an energy sword. Sev rolled off the ledge he had been sniping from to the ground six feet below. The elite went to follow him but Fi hit him in the head with two bullets, getting rid of his shield. Boss finished him off with a shot from his battle rifle, splattering blood on the wall behind him.

"Nice shot," said Fi, "I was out of ammo."

"Heads up," said Darman, "We've got reinforcements coming in." Boss looked up to see a phantom flying towards them. Just then, he saw a plasma grenade land right beside him.

"Grenade!" he yelled, leaping to the side, but he was still caught in the blast and flew one or two feet to the side.

"Boss? Boss!" Scorch yelled, "You alright?"

He shook his head to clear his senses and replied, "Yes, I'm fine."

"Oh no. Oh, fierfek, no." Scorch gaze was fixed on something over Boss's shoulder and he turned to look and what he saw made his heart plummet.

General Grievous was descending from the phantom.

"Take cover!" Boss yelled, "Don't fight him!" Delta Squad, Kelly, and Adams were the only ones who had any experience with him, Boss and Kelly being the only ones to have actually fought him.

"Believe us now?" Scorch asked Kal over the COM link.

"Yes, Scorch," he replied, "I believe you now." As long as they stay in cover, Boss thought, and didn't do anything stupid they'd be fine. But Grievous was already staring at Boss, and as he watched he took out two lightsabers and headed right for him.

"Damn," he said and rolled to the side as Grievous lunged at him.

"You won't escape me this time, clone."

"You remember me?" asked Boss, "I'm impressed." Grievous narrowed his eyes and lunged again, Boss having to duck and then jump over each lightsaber. By now Scorch and Fixer had moved forward, firing at Grievous. He turned to deflect them, letting Boss move out of the way. By now a few people had moved out of the structure, two Spartans and a clone he recognized as Commander Gett. He looked back at Grievous and saw in horror that Grievous had Fixer pinned on the ground, ready to strike.

"No!" he yelled, and sprinted forward throwing his shoulder into Grievous, knocking him off. He leaped back just in time to avoid his lightsabers. Scorch hurriedly helped Fixer up off the ground as Boss distracted him. By now Sev and Ordo ran in too help with the others still fighting the Covenant. Grievous, now surrounded, did not give in as he first lunged at Ordo and then Sev. They both dodged it but now the circle was broken. Out of the corner of his eye he saw two more figures exit the structure, but he didn't have the time to see who it was because Grievous now lunged at him. He ducked, hit knee hitting the ground. He threw his head back as the lightsaber passed over so close that he could hear his shields crackle. But that was only the first, Boss watched in dismay as Grievous brought the second one diagonally across his chest, slicing right through. He gave a cry of pain and fell onto his back, gasping for air. Grievous advanced upon him, and his life flashed before his eyes.

But then Scorch did one of the stupidest things Boss had ever seen him do. He dropped his gun and ran forward, leaping onto Grievous's back and wrapping his arms around his neck, pulling as hard as he could. Grievous yelled in fury as he was forced away from Boss. He saw Fixer kneel down next to him and felt him take his helmet off. Boss was sweating despite the temperature control that had been in his armor.

"Hang in there, Boss," he heard Fixer say, "Hang on we've got help coming." He looked over Fixer's shoulder and saw that the two figures were racing towards him and the others, and he was able to make out who they were.

It was none other than Obi-wan Kenobi and Etain Tur-Mukan.

Obi-wan raced forward to confront Grievous, activating his blue lightsaber, but Etain ran forward to kneel beside Fixer.

"Boss, can you hear me?" she asked.

"Yes," he could hear how weak his voice was.

"Just breathe normally, don't try to gasp for air," then said to Fixer, "Help me get the rest of his armor off." Boss felt his chest

plate being lifted. He looked over and saw Obi-wan come up to Grievous with Scorch still clinging to his back.

"Scorch!" yelled Ordo, "Get off of him you _di'kut_!" Scorch looked over to see Obi-wan standing there with his lightsaber at the ready.

"Oh, whoops," he said and brought up his legs to kick off of Grievous, landing on his back behind Obi-wan. Grievous, now furious, whirled around to strike Scorch but froze when he saw Obi-wan. He opened his eyes in surprise for a moment then narrowed them as he said,

"So, Kenobi, you _are_ here."

"You're dead," he replied, "I watched you die."

"Yes, you did," Grievous said, "But I was rebuilt. Sidious found me as a worthy general still even though I had failed in killing you. Yes, I needed parts replaced and reconstructed, but it was all done."

"I really think he had rehearsed that," Scorch whispered to Sev, who laughed quietly.

"Looks like I'll just have to do it again," Obi-wan said, obviously unfazed. Grievous replied by detaching another lightsaber and taking it into his third hand, activating it.

It was Mace Windu's.

The shock and grief appeared on Obi-wan's face, but then turned to a calm Boss had never seen.

"He'll be avenged," and with that he lunged forward, Grievous bringing up his lightsaber to block it. As Boss watched them he realized that Etain and Fixer had taken all of his upper body armor and he saw the gash across his chest, bright red but no blood. He gritted his teeth against the pain, struggling to breathe.

He wasn't surprised when she said, "It punctured his lungs, but I'll probably be able to heal it if I hurry."

"Probably?" asked Fixer, but she ignored him as she placed her hands on his chest, closing her eyes and concentrating deeply. After a moment he felt something weird in his chest, as if something inside him were moving. Then he felt a flash of pain and he shut his eyes, grimacing. But after the pain was gone he realized that he could breathe again. He took a deep breath, relieved.

"I can't heal the gash," Etain said, "But I was able to heal the lungs so you could breathe."

"Thanks," he said, but then looked up in alarm when he heard Grievous yell,

"Finish off the commando!" He saw that two MagnaGuards had descended from the phantom, and as soon as they landed they ran straight for him. Etain leaped up and activated her blue lightsaber and started dueling with one of the guards, but the other one went right past.

Fixer now got up, firing his battle rifle at the guard. It did nothing to slow him down so Fixer leaped over Boss to meet him head on. Sev and Ordo stood in front of Boss, giving him cover while Scorch grabbed Boss's arm and wrapped it around his neck, giving him support. By now Kal, Darman, and Fi had joined the fight. Kal ran up to Boss's other side and put his arm around his shoulder.

"You alright, son?" asked Kal, his concern for him showing fully.

"Better than earlier," said Boss. Kal looked at him with a confused look.

"He could barely breathe," Scorch answered for him, "Grievous's lightsaber had punctured his lungs but Etain had healed it." Darman and Fi were walking on either side of them, giving them cover. Fixer tried holding the guard back but was thrown aside when he was hit in the head with the staff. Ordo and Sev ran forward to distract him, using their forearms to block the staff. Etain was still fighting with the other MagnaGuard which was putting up a good fight. The two Spartans that had been standing by the structure ran forward to meet them.

"We saw what happened," said one, "But we couldn't come down to help since we have to guard Jusik."

"Bardan Jusik is here?" asked Kal, surprised.

"Yes, he was wounded during Order 66 so we're making sure nobody gets in here," he replied, then added, "By the way, the name's Will."

"Linda," said the other Spartan, a girl. They were interrupted when they heard Ordo yell,

"Darman! Fi! Look out!" They turned around too see the MagnaGuard rushing towards them having got away from Ordo and Sev. They were chasing him, but it was too fast so Darman and Fi ran forward, Darman tackling him around the waist.

"Come on," Kal said, and with the help of Scorch got Boss into the structure.

"Friendlies!" yelled Scorch when Jusik activated his green lightsaber when they walked in.

"Scorch?" asked Jusik, surprised, then he saw everyone else, "How are you all here?"

"We'll explain everything later," said Kal, setting down Boss.

"What happened to Boss?" asked Jusik, seeing the gash across his chest.

"General Grievous, that's what," said Scorch, kneeling next to Boss, "You sure you're alright?"

"Yes, I'm fine now," said Boss, "The others will need you, go help them." Scorch hesitated, then nodded and ran back out of the structure.

* * *

>Author's note:** Alright, nothing really to say except please review and also i couldnt remember Jusik's lightsaber color so if im wrong please correct me. And also I need to give credit to appledude211 since if it wasn't for him I'd still be stuck on chapter 20, and also if I don't give him credit he'll beat me, haha. And to mention that di'kut means 'moron' in Mandalorian.

22. Alliance

Author's note: Guess what?

Mix0master: Thanks Matt and I never got to ask, how many pages did it turn out to be?

Sniperwithashotgun: I'm not too good, I usually just make up last names and add people I know first names too it. Like Tony Adams, Tony is my brother's name.

Darth Red: I've got the first story all planned out, I just need to fill in the details. But I really have no clue what I'm going to do in the second except it will take place in episodes 4-6.

drunkenwerewolf: No, no flood yet. But they will be coming.

RC 1205 Shade: I'm not sure how many chapters this will turn out to be, I know a LOT though, lol.

Don113: I am the last person to ask about Star Wars names, I suck at making them up. That's why all the SW people in my story are from somewhere else.

Alex Donnelley: You know that journal I made, where you can ask me any question? Look on the second page and DelatGhost asked me that same question, and I answered it. I don't feel comfortable posting my middle name in the open, nothing personal.

I know you've heard this a lot but I am sorry that it's been longer to update, but I've been playing so much Kingdom Hearts 2 that I haven't written anything so I got a late start on the new chapter. But, now we've got old characters coming back in so as I always say, enjoy!

* * *

>Alliance**

When Scorch ran out onto the platform Will, Linda, and Commander Gett were still there, guarding over the wounded. He nodded to them and ran down to join back in to the fray. As he did he saw Obi-wan still fighting with Grievous and not too far away Etain dueling the MagnaGuard, but she seemed to have the upper hand. He ran in to help Darman and Fi, who were fighting the second guard. Ordo and Sev had caught up to them and were dodging blows.

Scorch was about to join them when he heard Grievous shout, "Bring in

the reinforcements!" He didn't like the sound of that, what reinforcements were he talking about? Just then, three phantoms flew in over the rise and stopped over the battle. Scorch's heart sank seeing both droids and Covenant piling out to join the fight. That wasn't the only reason why though.

Grievous had joined with the Covenant.

"Retreat! Retreat!" Kelly yelled, running towards them with Fred and Adams, "There's too many!" Etain jumped away from the fight with the guard and ran to distract the other one while the commandos and Ordo got away.

Obi-wan, having paused while Grievous called for reinforcements, said,

"This isn't over," and sprang to help Etain distract the guards.

"Come on!" yelled Sev grabbing his arm and jerking him towards the structure. He turned and ran with them, not turning back until he reached the entrance.

"Leave it to Grievous to not give up," Scorch said, watching as the droids and Covenant made their way closer.

"I can't believe he's teamed up with them," said Kelly, reloading her battle rifle, "We were already losing this war without droids and cyborgs to help."

"Aw, come on, now your making it sound as if you don't want us here," Fi said in a fake hurt voice.

"Of course we want you here," said Adams, "The Chief and Johnson would've been screwed without you, and then we would have really lost the war."

"Well, without them actually," Darman said, gesturing to the remainders of Delta Squad. A loud lightsaber slash interrupted them and they turned to see that Obi-wan had dismembered one of the guards with two diagonal slashes down its chest and he quickly leaped over to help Etain finish off the last one. When it too was left in pieces Grievous, who was directing the army, yelled in fury at seeing his last two guards destroyed. Obi-wan and Etain immediately ran to the cover of the structure where everyone else was at, not wanting to fall under Grievous's furious blows.

"Well, that was a close one," said Obi-wan but Etain had already moved forward to greet the commandos, shaking hands with Delta, resting her hand on Fi's shoulder and hugging Darman. They all knew the affection her and Darman shared, having worked with them on Coruscant. But Obi-wan watched with a grim look on his face, obviously not approving.

"Where's Niner and Atin?" she asked, noticing they were gone.

"Niner's healing up back at the station," replied Fi, "And Atin's unconscious somewhere."

"Hate to break it up," said Sev, "But I'd look behind you." They all turned and saw that the Covenant and droids were making their way closer, Grievous leading them on.

"Lets get inside," said Obi-wan and they made their way in.

"Is there any way we can get reinforcements?" asked Etain.

"I'll try to get a hold of Johnson again," Kelly said, "And call for some." She paused as she turned on her COM link, then hit her hand on the ground and said, "Damn!"

"What?" asked Fixer.

"They've jammed us," she replied, "No way to get through."

"Any UNSC forces down here you can get a hold of?" Boss asked in a weak voice obviously not recovered from his encounter.

Kelly shook her head, "It wouldn't matter if they're here or on _In Amber Clad_, can't reach 'em."

"Guess it's up to us," said Will.

"Fine by me," said Sev, "We can hold them off."

"Your too headstrong for your own good," said Scorch.

"Anyway, we wouldn't be able to hold them off long," Obi-wan said, "We'd be overwhelmed quickly."

"At least the guards are gone now," said Darman.

"How 'bout we do some hit-and-run tactics?" asked Kal, who had joined in the conversation after checking on Jusik and Boss, "We hit 'em and make the bastards run."

"I second that," put in Ordo, "We can't just sit here planning on what to do next while their planning on what to do with our bodies when we're dead."

"You're right," said Obi-wan, "a few of you go out there to hold them at bay, and then we'll figure out a better plan."

"_Ord'ika_ you lead them," said Kal. Ordo nodded and gestured to the commandos, knowing he had no right to order the Spartans around. Fred led them out with Adams right behind and they all took up defensive positions around the pillars that were situated there.

"Grenades on three," said Ordo. Scorch half expected the Spartans not to listen but they took out their own frags. Now wasn't the time to be arguing over leadership.

"Oneâ€|Twoâ€|THREE!" Ordo yelled the last word, and chucked his thermal detonator at the oncoming assault. Everyone else threw frags or plasma grenades if they had gotten the chance to pick them up. They landed at their feet, and a second before they blew Scorch said, "This is gonna be a beautiful blast." They exploded, taking out the whole front line but Grievous seeing the danger had leaped back in time to avoid the blast.

"Damn, that would have been nice to pick him off like that," said Sev, seeing him avoid it.

"It's not going to be that easy," said Ordo.

"It would be nice though," said Kelly. Sev pulled out his sniper rifle and started picking off Covenant and droids alike. With a sinking feeling Scorch looked farther back and saw four hunters with a few droidekas slowly making their way to the front.

"Uh, we've got a problem," said Darman, noticing it too.

Ordo saw it also, "Use any cover you have and for fierfek's sake don't do anything stupid!"

"I have a feeling that was directed at me," said Scorch as he hunkered down behind the pillar.

"Are we still jammed?" asked Fred.

Kelly tried her COM again, "Yes, there's absolutely no way through."

"Any way we can un-jam it?" asked Adams.

"I doubt it," said Will, "It's probably coming from a ship up in space, if not something closer but nothing on the ground we can take out."

"Sev, start trying to take out the droidekas and make them pull up short," Ordo ordered, "everyone else, if you got grenades now would be a great time to use them." Sev readjusted his aim so he could fire on the droidekas, and when he did they unrolled from their ball form and stood in their tripod position, their energy shields activated. They let out a barrage of fire onto their hideout so Sev had to pull back into cover.

"Damn, I was hoping to get a shot at the hunters," he said.

"Don't get yourself killed in the process," said Scorch.

"This is useless," Ordo said suddenly, frustrated, "We can't get even one shot off."

"We can't retreat," said Fred, "They'd be all over us." Ordo shook his head, obviously thinking. Scorch armed a frag and threw it, keeping them at bay, but he agreed with Ordo. They couldn't get any shots off without getting nailed by the droidekas, plus the hunters and the rest of the assault party. Grenades were all they had, but how long would that last?

Ordo must have been thinking the same thing since he said, "Use your grenades sparingly, they may not last long." Scorch peeked out and saw that the hunters were even closer than before, with the droidekas creeping forward behind them. If they made it to their cover, they'd be fried. Suddenly, a low roar was heard over the chaos of the battle.

"You guys hear that?" asked Scorch. They all paused to listen, trying

to figure out what it was until Will said,

"Now that's a beautiful sound."

It continued to get louder, until Adams yelled, "It's a pelican!" As soon as he said that, three pelicans flew over the structure, buffeting the ground with the draft. They did a U-turn and landed at the back of the assault party and Scorch saw none other than Sergeant Johnson and Atin each leading a group of helljumpers out of the pelicans, and a third group of marines jumped out of the third, guns blazing. The Covenant and droids, now surrounded, turned every which way to hold off both groups.

"Come on!" yelled Ordo, and lead them out of cover and into the open to face the enemies. "Sev! The hunters!" Sev immediately knelt and brought out his sniper, aiming at the hunters while the others rushed past him and into the battle. Obi-wan and Etain came out of the structure closely followed by Kal and Commander Gett and they all came in behind them. Grievous, having watched all this unfold clenched his fists at the fact that he wouldn't be able to take them all on.

"Retreat!" he called and he himself headed back to the Phantoms followed closely by his troops. The Covenant hesitated, not sure if they should listen to Grievous or not, but when the pelican's turrets started mowing them down they quickly changed their minds and headed for the phantoms.

"That's right, run you cowardly bastards and never come back!" yelled Adams after the retreating army. When they had all left, the new arrived group headed over to where they were standing.

"I think I missed a lot," said Atin. Darman and Fi ran forward and met him while Kal followed more slowly.

"You alright?" asked Darman.

"Yeah, I'm fine now no thanks to that elite," he replied, "Jumped at me from out of nowhere." He then saw Kal, Ordo, and the other newcomers and asked, "When did you all get here?"

"Ordo and I heard that Delta Squad and then you guys had disappeared without a word, so we decided to investigate," Kal answered.

Johnson, have now joined the group, asked, "Where's the Chief?"

"We don't know," Darman said grimly, "I guess you could say he's MIA."

"What happened?" asked Atin.

"We should probably get out of here before we tell each other our stories," said Fred, "But it's good to see you again, Johnson."

Johnson grinned, "I seem to make that impression on people."

"Someone help me with Boss and Jusik," said Gett, "Can't leave them

behind."

"I'll help," said Scorch and followed Commander Gett to the structure. When they walked in they saw Boss standing up and placing his helmet on as if he were never injured. But the way he stood clearly gave him away. Gett walked over to help Jusik up while Scorch walked over to Boss.

"We've got some help," he said, "And we're getting the hell out of here."

"That's good," Boss replied, "This wound is starting to sting."

"Ha, sting?" said Jusik, who had his arm around Gett's shoulder for support, "Come on, Boss, even you can't admit that it doesn't hurt."

"I've had worse," he replied simply, and walked outside with Scorch and Gett, helping Jusik, following him. The fact that he walked with a lopsided gait and held his arm over his chest, showed that in fact the wound was still hurting.

* * *

>"Is that everyone?" asked the pilot when they had all loaded into each pelican. The helljumpers and marines were staying behind to keep the Covenant parties on Halo under control.<p><p>

"Yeah, that's it," replied Johnson. He, Boss, Sev, Fred, Darman, Etain, and Obi-wan were in the pelican. The pilot nodded and took off, the other two pelicans following it out.

"Now is probably a good time for story time," said Darman, leaning back in his chair.

"We've got a long enough ride," said Johnson, "Boss, how 'bout you start."

"Alright," he said, his voice stronger now, and explained everything that had happened since they landed and when they saw the temple explode. "There was a huge flash of light and the next time we looked the temple was completely gone along with half of the gondola."

"I literally had to tackle Fi so he didn't get himself killed in the blast," said Darman.

"What happened in there?" asked Sev.

"We got in there and of course there's a bunch of Covenant guarding Regret," Darman began, "So we fire at him and figure out that he's also got an energy shield protecting him. So the Chief drops his weapon and attacks Regret with his fists ordering us to get out of there. We get the gondola ready but it starts up on its own and when the Chief comes out he's forced to jump into the lake. That's when we last saw him."

"What I don't get," said Boss, and then gestured to Obi-wan saying, "Is how you got here. Weren't you the one that ordered Omega Squad here?"

"Yes, I was," he replied, "But when they disappeared after saying they were going to investigate the shadow, I decided to see it for myself. But before I left, I received a distress signal from Etain who had escaped the destruction of Order 66. With her was her Commander, Gett, who had disobeyed the order and helped Etain escape. Then there was Bardan Jusik, who hadn't been as fortunate and was attacked by his clones, that's how he was wounded. They agreed to come with me but when we got to that one base and saw all the droids, we figured we were in the wrong place."

"So we did the next best thing," said Etain, "We took a ship and got out of there before we were noticed. Jusik tried jumping with the ship, but there was something different about it, it wasn't like Hyperspace, so we ended up landing here."

"Its cause it's Slipspace in this universe," Johnson pointed out.

"Well, that's where we met up with them," said Fred, "When our ship had been attacked we were able to find a longsword and escape before it blew up. The Chief and Johnson had already taken a longsword each to distract the Covenant when it blew; I guess that's why the Chief had thought we were dead. But we wandered around and found Halo, recognizing it from the Chief's descriptions. We were there even before the Covenant."

"How did you know we needed reinforcements?" Boss asked Johnson.

"Come on, when Kelly said there was a problem and then didn't say anything else, I figured you needed our help. Atin was conscious and better by then so me and him took a few pelicans and came to the rescue."

"We've got ourselves a problem though," said Darman, "I mean droids _and_ Covenant, that's going to keep our hands full."

"But now," said Fred, "With all of us here, we've got a good chance of coming out on top."

"As long as Grievous is here though," said Obi-wan, "We'll have to be careful. He is not a cyborg to mess with. But I've got a question, what happened to his fourth arm?"

Sev, who had his helmet off, smiled.

"You can thank the Chief for that one."

* * *

>Author's note**: Yes, it's shorter than the past few chapters have been, but compare it to my first chapter and I think you'll agree that I've been improving. Next few chapters or so are going to be leading up to the grand finale. So people who like the Flood, lets just say you'll be satisfied in a couple of chapters.

****Author's Note:**** More replies to reviews

halomasterchief: Thanks, I'm glad you still reading it. But I've actually got the ending all planned out, but I just have to set up everything in between.

Spartan weapons tech: You're thinking of the one from the Clone Wars series. Ordo is in the book Triple Zero. And commandos and ARCs don't always hate each other, in fact, Fi and Ordo are really good friends. Thanks for the review though.

Spartan JKT: Thanks for the tip, but I'm not much of a science person, lol.

RC 1205 Shade: Now that I think about it, I don't think I'll be able to finish this in a few chapters. But yes there will be a sequel, based in the Star Wars universe this time. And I've already seen the Halo 3 trailer, it's AWESOME! Now if only there was RC 2, my life would be complete.

Drakedragon: yeah, there will be no more characters coming in. WAY too many to keep track of, so that's why I'm splitting them up. Also, the Arbiter hasn't come in for a reason, but he'll make an appearance in one of the next couple of chapters. Thanks for the advice!

Well, I almost had a seizure of joy when about four or five people commented on my profile on Red vs. Blue "The Halo 3 trailer is here!" If you haven't seen it, just look it up on youtube, there's a whole bunch there to watch. Also look up Halo: Republic Commando on there, you'll be surprised. But in this chapter, things move fast, so pay attention and try not to space off no matter the temptation, lol.

* * *

The Library

When they arrived at _In Amber Clad_'s docking bay Commander Keyes was there to meet them. Sergeant Johnson went forward to greet her, followed by Obi-wan and Kal, who had Ordo at his shoulder.

"Ma'am," Johnson said, saluting.

She returned the salute and asked, "Was the mission successful?"

"In a manner of speaking," said Johnson, "Regrets been taken out, but we lost the Chief in the processâ€¦ literally."

"What do you mean 'lost'?"

"When the Chief, Darman, and Fi went into the temple, a Covenant ship was getting ready to fire upon it. Darman and Fi got out, but the Chief had to bail into the lake. We haven't heard a word from him since."

She nodded, deep in thought, and then asked, "And who are you two?"

"I am General Obi-wan Kenobi," he replied, bowing his head respectfully, "and this isâ€¦"

"Sergeant Kal Skirata," he said for him, "I trained these commandos, along with him." He gestured to Ordo.

"The name's Ordo," he said, without showing any respect.

"He's a Captain," he explained.

"Where did you come from?" she asked, unfazed by Ordo, "The commando's time?"

"Yes," said Obi-wan, "We came after both Delta Squad and Omega Squad went missing."

"We came separately," added Kal, shooting a look at Obi-wan.

He acknowledged it with a nod, "Yes, we did. Kal and Ordo had found Delta Squad and, Kelly I believe? The others and I were found by the three Spartans, Fred, Will, and Linda. We were in a bad way, having escaped Order 66. But in the end we met up along with the remainders of Omega Squad. That's when Sergeant Johnson and Atin came in with reinforcements."

"Where is the Chief?" she asked Johnson.

"MIA, ma'am," he replied, "We don't know where he went. We lost contact with him after they fired on the temple."

Her face remained expressionless as she said, "We must move on, if we don't hear from him when we have the time we'll send a search party. But for now, we need to plan how to get into the Library and retrieve the index." Johnson nodded and walked back to the group.

"All right, leaders with me. We're discussing how we're gettin' the index."

"I knew it!" said Adams as Atin, Fred, and Boss, who was still moving with a small limp, walked forward.

"Any news on Niner?" asked Atin.

"Not that I've heard," replied Johnson, "You can ask Keyes when we're in the briefing room." Atin nodded, not satisfied, but followed Johnson nonetheless.

"Alright, let's get ourselves rested," said Adams, "since we'll have to play the waiting game again."

"We'd better gear up first," said Fixer.

"Aw, come on Fixer, you're no fun," said Scorch, "We deserve to relax."

"Commander Keyes may want to leave right away," Gett pointed out, "We might as well be ready."

"And they might have new armor for us," said Fred, "Ours is still a little outdated."

"Well, I say we go then," said Sev, "Lead the way, Adams."

* * *

>As they gathered in the armory, the Marine Sergeant in charge turned around as they walked in. His eyes widened as they fell on the commandos and Spartans.<p><p>

"We need some ammo and some new guns, sir," said Adams.

"Well, we've got that," he said, not taking his eyes off of them.

"You know it's not nice to stare, Sergeant," said Fi, walking past him too look at the neatly assembled battle rifles.

"Sergeantâ€| " Linda looked at his tag, "Benning, could you help us out?"

"Uh, yes, um, what was it you needed again?" he asked as he got over his shock.

"Guns and ammo," said Adams.

"Dibs on rockets," Scorch said.

"Come on now, Scorch, no need to hog them all," said Darman.

"Who needs the guns?" asked Benning.

"Gett here does," said Etain, "I could use one too, for backup."

"Same," said Jusik, "Lightsaber won't get me far here."

"And I could use a sniper rifle," said Linda.

Benning looked at Jusik curiously at the word 'lightsaber', "Alright, ammo is over there behind me and I'll pick you three out a battle rifle each and a sniper, and something else if you wish."

"Pistol, by chance?" asked Gett.

"Yes, I'll grab one," and he disappeared into another room.

"The look on his face was priceless," said Will after he left.

"You know we're going to get a lot of looks like that," said Kelly. "I mean most haven't seen a Spartan, and seeing three at once would be overwhelming. Plus the commandos," she added as an afterthought.

"Well, they'd better get used to is 'cause it looks like we'll be here for a while," said Darman.

"Alright, let's get our stuff and get ready, we'll need to be prepared," said Etain, "I have a bad feeling about this battle."

* * *

>Everyone, Miranda, Johnson, Boss, Fred, Atin, Obi-wan, Kal, and Ordo, walked into the briefing room and took a seat except for

Miranda, who walked to the front.<p><p>

"As you all know, we have discovered Delta Halo. So far it has been partly similar to the Halo the Chief discovered after the fall of Reach, our military planet. We think that there is another Library like on the old Halo, which holds the Index to activate it's weapons."

"Do you know where it is?" asked Johnson.

"We have a good idea," she replied, "We found a structure that looks like the first Library. The Covenant have already made a move for it, so if it is the Library we must get a firm hold on it. Any suggestions?"

"We get in there and take it for ourselves," said Fred.

"We've got to be careful," said Johnson, "If this Library is anything like the first, it'll be crawling with Flood." Boss and Fred looked at him sharply, but the others had no clue what he was talking about.

"You mean the infectious forms?" asked Boss.

Johnson nodded, "Seems the Chief has educated you."

"Wait a moment," said Kal, "What is the 'Flood'?"

"They are infectious forms that insert themselves into your nervous system and take over your body and turn you into a combat form," replied Miranda.

"Pretty," muttered Ordo.

"We have to make a break for it," said Obi-wan, "If it is what you said, and the Covenant get a hold of the Index, they'll try to activate it."

"Then we go for it," said Miranda, "But who goes?"

"We'll go," said Atin, "How's Niner?"

"He is better but he is not well enough to fight yet," replied Miranda.

"What about the base with the portal?" asked Boss, "We should cover that so that Grievous can't bring in any more reinforcements."

"Can your squad take care of that?" asked Miranda.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Etain and I will help you," said Obi-wan, "If Grievous does retreat there you'll need lightsabers to back you up."

"What can we do?" asked Fred.

"Lord Hood sent me a message earlier that if I had any reinforcements to spare to send them to Cairo Station," said Miranda, "You and the Spartans can head there."

"We'll go with Omega Squad," said Kal.

Miranda nodded, "Johnson, you'll come with me to the Library. We'll head out at 18:00, be ready."

"Yes, ma'am," he replied.

"Get everyone geared up," said Miranda, "It's time to put this to an end."

* * *

>"Do you think it's smart to spread us out like that?" asked Fixer after the leaders explained to them the plan. Jusik had been taken to the Medical room after they had left the armory to join Niner in recovery.<p><p>

"What do you mean?" asked Will.

"What if Grievous finds that as a weakness?"

"We have our sixes covered," said Kal.

"What about Earth?" asked Adams.

"We'll be close enough to respond if he does," said Fred. Fixer nodded, satisfied.

"Any more questions?" asked Obi-wan. No one said anything.

"Did you all getgeared up?" asked Johnson.

"We did while you were in the briefing room," said Darman.

"We better than too," said Boss.

"You sure you're alright?" asked Kal.

"I'm fit to fight," he replied, holding up his battle rifle.

"Then let's get some weapons," said Obi-wan, "You guys be ready to leave when we get back." And with that, everyone in the meeting left leaving them behind.

"Why is everyone so uptight?" asked Scorch, watching them leave.

"It's the Flood," said Will, "They're not your average enemy."

"But, we've got armor. We've got nothing to worry about," said Sev.

"That's not true," said Kelly, "I remember the Chief telling me about his last moments on Halo. He was attacked, and one of the Flood made a dent in his neck armor which allowed an infection form to insert itself into his system."

Adam's eyes widened, "You mean he was a Flood?"

"No," she replied, "Cortana was able to take energy from his armor and blow up the form. If she hadn't been there, the Chief would have then turned."

"I guess we have to take this pretty seriously," said Fi.

"I'm sure you can do it, Fi," said Scorch, "I mean you're never funny."

"You know I never try to be funny," said Fi.

"Ha! Now I have to laugh at that," said Darman.

"But with the Flood," said Fixer, getting them back on track as usual, "How do you defeat them?"

"As any other enemy," said Will, "You shoot them till they die."

"Sounds simple enough," said Scorch.

"So we go in, kill anything that gets in our way, get the Index, and then get the hell out of there?" asked Darman.

"Sounds about right," said Kelly.

"Then when do we leave?" asked Gett.

"You heard them," said Linda, "As soon as they get back, we go."

"Knowing Ordo, we'll never leave," said Fi.

"Excuse me?" asked someone behind them. They turned and saw Ordo with a newly acquired battle rifle, plus his blaster rifle and pistols. "I was the first one done thank you very much."

"I figured you'd be taking your precious time picking out the best weapon," replied Fi.

"The fact that I would end up protecting you, I wouldn't be complaining." After he finished his sentence the rest of them returned from the armory.

"Let's go," said Johnson, "Miranda's waiting for us in the docking bay. Everyone who isn't going into the Library will stay on _In Amber Clad_ and it'll take the jump to Cairo Station. Kal, Omega Squad, come with me." They followed him down to the Docking bay where they saw Jusik and Niner standing there, waiting to say goodbye.

"Thought you were leaving without saying goodbye?" asked Jusik with a grin. They walked over to where they were standing and Kal walked up and gave Niner a hug.

"Feelin' better?" he asked, letting go.

"Lots," Niner replied, "But I guess I can't go out with you guys yet."

"The Nurse barely would let us come out here," Jusik said.

"Cause you should be resting," said Kal.

"Don't worry, Sarge, we will," replied Niner, "Once we're ready we'll be right out there at your side."

Kal smiled, "Son, I know you will," and he clapped a hand on his shoulder.

"Alright we know you love each other very much but let's get a move on," said Fi.

"_Some_one is impatient," said Darman.

"Stay patient, Fi," Kal said, hitting him in the side of the head lightly, "We've got plenty of time."

"Sorry, Sarge, just the adrenaline before the battle startin' up," he replied.

"Didn't know you had any," said Ordo.

Fi was about to come up with a reply when Johnson walked over, "Pelicans are all set and we're ready to go. The Commander is waitin'."

"Alright let's go," said Kal, and then turned to Niner and Jusik, "You two rest up and afterwards you can help us out."

"You got it Sarge," said Jusik.

"We'll be out there soon," said Niner. Kal nodded and they said their goodbyes as the remainders of Omega Squad, Kal, Ordo, and Johnson boarded the Pelican. Commander Keyes was already in there, studying a chart. She looked up as they walked in and then said to the Pilot,

"Take us up."

"Aye, aye, ma'am," he responded, and they felt the Pelican rumble as is lifted off of the docking platform and into the reaches of space.

"Darman, I need to ask you something," she said.

"Yes, ma'am?" he asked, surprised. This was the first time she had addressed any of the commandos directly besides Boss and Atin.

"When you, the Chief, and Fi were making your way towards the Regret you stumbled upon a hologram from one of the Prophets, am I correct?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Did you happen to get a recording of it?"

"Yes, we did, the Chief and I each have one."

"May I see it?"

"Of course, ma'am," he replied, pulling out a holo-projector and setting it in the middle of the seats.

"Good to see something from home," said Atin as a projection of one of the Prophets came on, speaking a message:

"I shall light this holy ring; release its cleansing flame and burn a path into the divine beyond!"

"Cortana thought that it meant the Covenant wanted to activate Halo," said Darman.

Keyes nodded, "Yes, I thought as much. That is why they are already making a break for the index. And that's also why it's crucial for us to get their first. They don't understand Halo's destruction."

"So pretty much this is based on who gets there first?" asked Atin.

"Pretty much," said Johnson.

"Well, a race to the finish," said Ordo, "won't this be fun."

When they landed outside the Library, they leaped out with the few Marines that came with them. Darman would have liked it if Adams had come, but he was going with Delta Squad back to the Covenant base.

"Linnam, Dawson, you two scout ahead and report back with anything dangerous," said Johnson.

"Yes, sir," they replied and ran into the entrance to the Library.

"Alright let's follow them in slowly," said Johnson, "This place could or already be crawling with Flood."

They walked in silence for a while, keeping a lookout for Covenant and Flood alike when suddenly they came upon a floating robot that had two wings sticking out with a red eye in the middle.

"What is that?" asked Atin.

"A Sentinel," whispered Johnson, "Careful, those things aren't friendly. Take it out." As soon as he gave the order they all opened fire on it. In no more than three seconds the Sentinel lay on pieces on the ground.

"What exactly do they do?" asked Ordo.

"They shoot lasers out of that little eye thing. They're used to control the Flood, but I guess they're not so fond of us."

"Sergeant Johnson!" a Marines voice cut in over the COM link.

"What is it, Linnam?" asked Johnson.

"We found a couple of Flood combat forms, but they're not doing anything."

"Don't fire at 'em, wait till we catch up with you guys."

"Yes, sir-ARGH!"

"Linnam? Linnam!" Johnson yelled.

"Sir, Linnam is down! I repeat Linnam is down!" yelled Dawson frantically, "There are infection forms everywhere! I'm surrounded!"

"Hold your position, we're coming!" He ran forward yelling, "Come on!" Everyone followed him as they hurried to help Dawson. Darman's heart was beating. What had the Flood done to Linnam? As they grew closer they heard a weird noise, almost like a mutated growl. And then one screech that send chills down his spine.

"Dawson! Where are you at?" yelled Johnson, looking wildly around, but he never answered. "Dawson, God dammit, answer me!" Just then one of the horrific beings Darman had ever seen leaped out in front of him. Its head hung on its shoulder as if its neck didn't work anymore. The fingers on the right hand had been elongated so they looked like whips and the face was horribly mutated. But the thing that made it worse was the tag that was still somehow stuck to its chest.

P. Linnam.

Darman didn't know what to do; he didn't want to shoot him since it was Linnam. But when it lashed out with its hand and struck him across the face, sending him sprawling to the floor, he had different thoughts. He rolled to his back and whipped out his battle rifle, firing at the Flood form. His eyes opened wide when he shot off its left arm, but it didn't slow it down at all. It charged at him, ready to deal another blow when Johnson jumped forward and nailed it in the chest with a shotgun round. It fell over backwards, dead.

Johnson offered a hand and he took it, "Thanks." He nodded, a grim look on his face.

"You did what you had to do, Johnson," said Keyes, walking up beside him. But their conversation was cut off as a succession of mutated growls and screeches rang around the room and without warning, Flood combat forms and infectious forms poured out from the walls. Everyone opened fire without hesitating, holding them off.

The battle had truly begun.

* * *

>Author's note:** I had to add the Prophet's message since I had forgotten to add it in earlier. But, the Flood are now into the story and about the Arbiter, he'll be making an appearance soon so be patient, along with the Chief. This question has been asked often too, but yes I am making a sequel and it will be based mostly in the Star Wars universe. Well, that's it, review and tell me what you think!

****Author's note:**** More replies to the reviews.

Jebus: Actually, I didn't make that up. In the book The Flood that really does happen.

RC 1205 Shade: Oh man I hate 343 GS with a vengeance. Great thing about fanfics is that I can do anything I want with Spark ;)

Lulu: Yes, she does but he won't be in the story since some people haven't read Triple Zero let alone Hard Contact so many would be confused. But if I could I definitely would put her son in.

Alright well I'm hoping to update faster cause I'm out of school and done with Drivers Ed classes. My goal is to finish this before summer ends and to start the sequel. Let's hope I meet it! But for now, here's Ch. 24.

* * *

>Betrayal

Everyone who hadn't gone into the Library now sat in a room, waiting until they arrived at Cairo Station. They were taking the ship Attero, which had earlier given them transportation to In Amber Clad. Some of them had fallen asleep since they needed the rest, but Boss and Fred had been unable to go to sleep, especially after they had heard the message from Miranda Keyes.

"We've entered the Library and made our way in, but we've been attacked by the Flood in a full scale assault and are completely surrounded. We are fighting them back, but it will be a while until weâ€¦" and the message had cut off.

The others hadn't heard the message since it was for the commanding officers only. But Fred and Boss had been discussing it ever since they heard it.

"So, you think they'll get past it?" asked Boss.

"She said they're fighting them back," replied Fred, "So, yes, I think they'll fight them off." There was a pause, neither of them knowing what else to say when Fred asked suddenly, "How did you get here?"

"Through the portal," Boss replied, confused.

"No, not the transportation, I mean, how were you in the right spot? It could've been any other person in that time, someone who would be unwilling to help us out. Hell, if Grievous had found it first we would've been screwed by now."

Boss shook his head, "I have no clue. We were only in that area because of a mission we had. It went wrong, and that was when we met up with the Chief, or Scorch did anyway."

"What about Grievous? How did he get tied up into all of this?"

"He came to kill me and my squad," Boss said flatly, "Gave us a chance to join him and the Empire. We refused, of course, and he's set out to kill us since then. Scorch would've died that night if it

hadn't been for the Chief."

There was another moment of silence until Fred asked, "Have you ever lost a squad member?"

Boss looked at him, "Almost, once."

"Almost?"

"It was Sev; we thought he had been killed on a mission. On the same planet we were before we came here actually. During an attack on an assault ship we lost contact with him, his last words saying that he was surrounded. We went on, having our orders, when a few weeks later we got word of him. A group of clone troopers had found him in the forest, near dead. We headed out right away and figured out that he had actually fought off his attackers and not able to get a hold of us stayed in the jungle." He paused, then said, "Knowing the pain I felt when I thought we had left Sev behind, I can't imagine other peoples, like Omega Squad."

"Why, what happened?" Fred asked.

"Every member had once had a different squad, and had all lost them at the same time, Atin having lost two. There, they were put together and have worked with each other ever since."

"That would be hard," said Fred. Boss was about to reply when he heard a shuffling in the corner of the room and saw Scorch sit up on his elbows, his helmet removed.

"Aren't you guys having such a lively conversation," said Scorch, grinning, "Great way to get us motivated for the upcoming mission."

"Go back to sleep Scorch," said Boss.

"Nah, I'm up now," he replied, getting up into a sitting position, "Why aren't you guys sleeping?"

"Just can't," replied Fred.

"Ha, like I'm gonna believe that."

"Alright, we got a message from Keyes in the Library," Boss said.

"They all right?" Scorch asked his playful mood suddenly serious.

"From what we know, yes, but the message was cut off and we don't know if they made it or not since they were attacked and surrounded by the Flood."

"She said they were fighting them back," added Fred, "so they're most likely okay."

"Who's okay?" asked Obi-wan, coming over to join the conversation,

"The group that went into the Library," replied Boss, "They met some

Flood but we think they'll fight through it."

Obi-wan nodded, "I'm sure they will; that's a formidable group that went in there."

"We're formidable too," said Scorch, "Whatever that means."

"Hard to deal with," replied Sev, walking over, "C'mon Scorch, even I knew that."

"Yeah, cause the word fits you perfectly."

"I barely know you two and I can already tell that you both use the COM link the most," said Obi-wan, smiling.

"You could say that, sir," said Scorch. Just then a sudden lurch by the ship cut their conversation short.

"Are we there?" asked Boss.

"I don't know," replied Kelly, who had joined in, "That seemed too short of a trip."

By now everyone was awake, woken by the _Attero's_ sudden stop.

"Could just be something up with the ship," said Fixer, but his words didn't calm the tension that had filled the room. Just then their door to the room opened and the Captain of the ship, Captain Denello, entered the room.

"Sir!" Fred said, and everyone besides the Jedi snapped a salute.

"At ease," he said, returning the salute, "As you probably figured out we jumped out of Slipspace earlier then planned."

"Why, sir?" asked Boss.

"We picked up something on our radar, something _big_. So we decided to check it out."

"Anything yet?" asked Obi-wan.

"Not yet, but we're looking for it. Whatever it is doesn't want to be found. We'll keep you updated, but I suggest you all be ready in case you need to be deployed since this could be an emergency."

"We will, sir," replied Fred. Denello nodded and left the room.

"What do you think it was?" asked Linda.

"It might be related to the Covenant somehow, or even Grievous," replied Adams.

"Well, he said it didn't want to be found, so we can assume it's not on our side," said Will.

"All we can hope for is that it's a false alarm, and NOT related to

the Covenant," said Gett.

* * *

>"Ordo! Behind you!" yelled Atin. They were still completely surrounded by the Flood. Now they were fighting desperately to hold them back but fortunately the wave of the mutated beings seemed to be getting thinner and thinner.<p><p>

Ordo spun around at the warning and saw a combat form charging at him. Too late to bring up his guns he kicked his leg into the stomach of the Flood. He grunted in disgust as his foot went right through the form and out the other side. He wrenched it back out and finished it off with his pistols.

"They just won't quit!" yelled Fi, bringing down another Flood with his battle rifle.

"Just keep firing!" said Keyes, "They're starting to back down!" Darman saw that she was right. Fewer were coming up over the walls, and there were no more infection forms. Darman looked over to see Kal firing his battle rifle profusely, dropping three combat forms in succession. The fourth form looked different. It was fatter, with little tentacles hanging off the side, and it almost waddled toward Kal. He shot it, but gave a cry of surprise when it exploded with almost the force of a grenade and infection forms poured out, heading straight for the fallen Sergeant.

"Sarge!" Darman leaped forward, stepping on two of the forms and shooting the last two, making them explode. He then quickly helped Kal up, who was rubbing his arm.

"Thanks, son," he replied. Darman then went to help Johnson, who was dealing with a pair of stubborn combat forms. He finished one off with a shot to the head and Johnson got the other in the stomach with a shotgun round.

There were then only a few left and in no time they lay on the ground, all dead. Everyone regrouped in the center of the mass, the commandos and Ordo's armor covered in green blood. They were all panting heavily, trying to catch their breath after the intense battle.

"Man, that was a close one," said Atin, wiping some blood from his visor.

"Too close," said Keyes, "We'll have to stay together from now on, and try to not get caught in another trap like that."

"It's almost impossible to-" Darman was cut off by a screech from farther down the hallway, letting them know they were far from the finish.

"Lets not just sit here," said Johnson, "We'll be picked off one by one if we do."

"Your right lets go," said Keyes and following her lead they headed down the hallway.

* * *

>A lone phantom descended toward the Library, its engines echoing through the silence. It slowed to a stop outside the entrance, dropping off an elite. He walked forward until a being comes up from behind. The elite spun around and fired at the Enforcer, but it did nothing to slow it down. Just then the phantom came back and fired at it, drawing it away from the elite.<p><p>

"Lower the shield, Arbiter!" said Tartarus from inside the phantom, "I'll pick you up when you've finished!" The Arbiter snorted, typical for the Brutes to sit back and watch from the sidelines. He pushed the thought away; he had to concentrate on getting the Icon. He went on forward, ignoring the little flying beings that were everywhere and came to a weird pillar. He thought he had to go a different way until he saw a small button on the side, so he decided to press it. He leaped back when it shot upwards, revealing a small hole that led into some type of vent, he realized that he had activated some sort of a piston. He considered jumping in, and then thought _I really have no choice_, and leapt in.

He fell downwards, tumbling down several different vents until he came out another hole and landed on his feet. He walked forward into another corridor where he saw a lone Sentinel hovering a few feet away. He walked past quickly before it could notice him when up ahead he heard grunts screaming and a jackal trying to keep control of the panicked party. He rushed forward, carbine in hand, and shot the first Sentinel that was attacking them. It took ten shots then he brought out the plasma pistol he had attached to his belt and charged it, letting out a plasma charge right into the second Sentinel. It exploded immediately, falling to the floor almost crushing the jackal.

"Arbiter, our savior!" the grunt cried, and then muttered to the jackal, "Stupid jackal, say thank you!" The jackal only glared at the Arbiter, which surprised him. Usually jackals showed the elites a little more respect. He ignored it and moved on with his newly formed squad behind him. As they walked through the corridors battling Sentinels, the Arbiter noticed dead brutes and other Covenant bodies that had been slain and then heard Tartarus's voice,

"You're getting close to one of the shield generators. Many of my brutes have fallen trying to take it down." The Arbiter gripped his carbine tighter and pushed forward, ignoring the scorn in the Chieftain's voice. When the level of bodies increased, he had a feeling that something powerful lay up ahead.

He figured out he was right.

He entered a large room, his ragged squad already killed by the Sentinels, to see an Enforcer hovering in the middle with a few Sentinels flying around it. He immediately took cover, hoping it didn't see him. When it didn't he heard Tartarus's voice once again.

"It's useless to attack an Enforcer from the front. Hide in the shadows, wait until it loses interest. Then, strike the beast when its back is turned." The Arbiter stayed in his cover, waiting for the Enforcer to turn. When it did, he grabbed a plasma grenade from his belt, armed it, and threw it at the Enforcer. It stuck to one of its legs, exploding three seconds later. But instead of blowing it up, it

only turned to try to find its original owner. The Arbiter clicked his mandibles in frustration and dove back into cover, moving quickly through the shadows.

It was a repetitive fight; every time the Enforcer turned its back the Arbiter primed another grenade and threw it at it. When he ran out of grenades he looked around desperately for some and found a dead brute with some plasma grenades lying beside him. He didn't hesitate and burst out of his cover, sprinting for the grenades. The Enforcer instantly saw him and fired its little red bullets, making explosions in his wake. When he reached brute he didn't slow as he picked up the grenade, primed it, and threw it at the Enforcer. The grenade went right over its shields in the front and stuck to its back, and three seconds later it exploded completely, debris raining down on the ground.

The Arbiter brought up his hand to guard his face from any stray debris then ran down into the center.

"Now, find a way to lower the shield," Tartarus growled, obviously showing no sign of a congratulations. The Arbiter looked around and noticed four pillars standing in a square shape. He proceeded to activate them and when he did he saw a panel rise up in the middle. "You've released the shield's power source. Now, find a way to remove it from its cradle." As if the Arbiter couldn't figure it out. He walked over and hit the button which sounded off a loud groaning and then the platform he was standing on started moving forward and then outside the structure.

"I'll pick you up at the ledge," Tartarus said, bringing in the phantom from the left. But then an Enforcer swooped in front of them from the doorway that had just opened, forcing the phantom to bail to one side.

"Blasted machines!" yelled Tartarus, "Find your own way through the wall, Arbiter!" The Arbiter snorted and waited for the platform to reach the other end but as he did he noticed what the Sentinels at the end were fighting.

It was the Flood.

* * *

>"Come on keep moving!" yelled Miranda Keyes as they sprinted down the hallway, taking down any Flood in their way. It was all a race to the finish now, they had got wind that the Covenant had brought in reinforcements and were slowly gaining on them.<p><p>

"You two stay behind and hold them back!" ordered Johnson, a grim look on his face. The Marines that he chose knew what they were doing and one replied,

"Don't worry, Sarge, we'll hold them back until our last breath," and they both turned and ran back the other way. Johnson stared after them for a while until Atin broke the silence, "Come on, we better keep moving." He nodded and they all followed Keyes once again. They ran in silence for a few minutes, no Flood attacking, when they heard a voice over the COM link.

"Proceed to the objective! We'll hold them off as long as we can!" It

was one of the Marines that had gone back. Suddenly the other Marine let out an inhuman scream and yelled, "Get it off me!"

"Suppressive fire! Suppressive fire!" the other Marine yelled then the COM cut off. Johnson shut his eyes tight for a moment, as if trying to block out the images in his head, then opened them again and went forward. Darman felt a whole new respect for the Sergeant, able to do what had to be done in order to achieve their mission, even if it meant sending his men to their deaths. If in the same position, would he be able to do it? He pushed the question out of his head; he had to keep his mind on what was at hand. Suddenly they heard a Flood growl from the left and it leaped from its cover, knocking Fi to his side. Ordo quickly brought up his pistols and fired at the form standing over Fi, bringing it down in a few shots.

He walked over to help Fi up and said, "Your welcome, you owe me one."

"I'm pretty sure that makes us even," replied Fi, following everyone else as they continued down the corridor.

"What! When did you save my life?" asked Ordo.

"Remember the grenade?"

"Oh come on I would've survived that, it was the cops that were there that you saved."

"Don't remind me of that," said Kal, "Fi, you've never given me more of a scare that day."

"Why, what'd he do?" asked Johnson.

"Had some terrorists locked up in a building with some hostages and we were all called in," said Ordo as if it was an everyday thing, "A Jedi went in to try and negotiate but was killed and thrown back outside. Niner and Fi went up with some local cops to check out the dead body when they figured out it had grenades strapped to it. Fi, being the _di'kut_ he is, threw himself on top of it and smothered the blast."

"I was a hero that day," said Fi.

"Yeah, and you could've been a dead one too," said Darman.

"How come when someone does something heroic and doesn't die they get contradicted afterwards?" asked Fi.

"Cause what they did probably could've killed them, _ner vod_" said Atin.

"Aw, so you do care about me," said Fi.

"Don't be expecting a hug," replied Ordo. They went on in silence, the momentarily distraction lost as they focused on any movement in the shadows that could be the Flood ready to strike. They heard screeches up ahead letting them know that there were still some Flood left to be fought and soon enough three or four combat forms appeared in front of them, one holding a shotgun and another holding a pistol.

They were instantly taken down without mercy.

"They can use weapons!" said Atin as Johnson grabbed some shotgun ammo.

"Sorry, must've missed mentionin' that," replied Johnson. Darman ignored their conversation and looked up farther ahead, seeing something.

"Uh, guys, I think we're close." Everyone turned to look and they saw a gondola which led to a structure on the other side. Nothing else led to it, showing that they had to take the gondola across.

"Let's get on before the Covenant catch up with us," said Keyes.

* * *

>The Arbiter moved quickly forward, followed by Half-Jaw. He had met up with the Spec Ops leader on the way to the Icon. Now he had an entire squad of elites at his side and was ready to deal with anything that got in their way. When they saw a gondola ahead, Half-Jaw only followed him onto the gondola but when they reached it they saw another gondola already heading towards the other side.<p><p>

"More humans!" growled Half-Jaw.

"They must be on their way to the Icon," the Arbiter pointed out, watching the gondola slowly crawl towards the structure. They were cut off by a screech from behind them and they both turned toward the noise. Suddenly Half-Jaw activated his plasma sword and said,

"On your way, Arbiter; I'll deal with these beasts." And with that he leaped off the gondola and headed toward where the screech came from. The Arbiter moved forward, admiring Half-Jaw's courage, and activated the gondola which slowly moved forward after the humans. Suddenly Tartarus's phantom came in from behind and his voice came in over the COM link.

"I see that coward didn't join you. I'll do what I can to keep the Flood of your back." Anger burned in his belly at the brute's comment, but he bit back a reply. Now was not the time to start petty arguments. "We must not let the humans get the Icon. The Hierarchs do not take kindly to failure!" The Arbiter ignored his comment and readied himself.

"Look! Up ahead!" one elite said, "The parasite gathers for an attack!"

"I'll break their ranks," said Tartarus, bringing the phantom forward and firing upon the Flood.

"Be ready!" yelled the Arbiter, but no need. The elites were all ready for the upcoming fight. And sure enough, when the gondola was close enough, the Flood leaped and parasite and Covenant joined in battle.

* * *

>"Mckenzie, Perez, you cover the entrance," ordered Johnson and the

two marines went to each side of the entryway.<p><p>

"Actually, everyone stay here," said Keyes, "I'll grab it myself." Johnson was about to protest but the look on her face silenced him. The gondola had made it to the other side they were now right outside where the Index was. Keyes walked in while everyone else stayed by the entryway. After a few minutes Johnson said, "This is taking too long, c'mon. Marines stay here." Omega, Ordo, and Kal followed them into a large, circular room. In the center there lay a large hole where in the middle, hovering above it, was the Index. There, Miranda was hanging onto some sort of tentacle, trying to grab the index. Johnson hurried forward just as he grabbed it. As she did the tentacle slipped and she started to fall before Johnson grabbed the other end.

"You know, your father never asked me for help either!" Darman had no clue to who her father was, but she ignored the comment and attached the Index to her belt.

"The Index is secure," she announced. Darman breathed a sigh of relief; at least something had gone right in this whole thing.

"Mckenzie! Perez! How's our exit?" Johnson yelled, after a short pause he asked again, "You hear me Marines?" After another moment of silence he said, "We've got trouble." Everyone instantly had their guns at the ready, scanning the room for any hostiles. When Johnson started firing Darman had no clue what he was firing at until he saw the elite in camouflage.

"Fierfek!" he yelled and started to fire too. But the elite had already reached Johnson and it was too dangerous to fire for fear of hitting him. The elite grabbed him by the shoulder, disarming him and they looked at each other for a moment.

"How you doin'?" Johnson asked before the elite hit his head on Johnson's, knocking him out.

"Sergeant! Stay down!" yelled Keyes, firing at the elite with her dual SMGs. It did nothing to the elite for it dodged behind a rock.

"Johnson? Johnson!" she called, but got no reply. Darman scanned around the room for the elite, which was obviously a much higher ranked elite to be doing this much damage on its own. It suddenly then appeared from behind the rock and hits the SMGs from Keyes's hands. But before he could do anything to her, there was a wave of electricity and Keyes flew into the hands of an alien he had never seen before.

"Excellent work, Arbiter, the hierarchs will be pleased," he said.

"The icon is my responsibility," the elite replied. Darman and the others remained silent, not knowing what in the hell was going on.

"_Was _your responsibility," the alien replied, plucking the Index off of Keyes's belt, "Now it is mine." Darman watched as three brutes closed in on the elite, one dragging Johnson away.

"A bloody fate awaits you and the rest of your incompetent race... and I, Tartarus, Chieftain of the Brutes, will send you to it."

"When the Prophets learn of this, they will take your head!" the elite growled in reply.

"Learn of it?" Tartarus repeated, and then laughed, "Fool, they ordered me to do it." Darman sensed what was coming and without thinking he stepped forward beside the elite, who was holding a wound in his side.

"Darman, what are you doing!" Atin whispered. He ignored him and held his battle rifle steadily at Tartarus.

He snorted, "So the commandos are here as well, what a bonus."

"Hurt him and you're dead," said Darman. The elite looked at him with a look of confusion, gratitude, and anger all mixed together.

"I don't need a human to protect me," he growled. Tartarus ignored Darman's comment and lowered his weapon, which looked like a huge hammer.

"Try and stop me," he growled and fired at the elite. He flew back and fell into the hole, unconscious. Darman, who was caught in the blast, was thrown to the side.

"Darman!" Fi yelled and ran to his side, helping him up. The other aliens made a start toward them but Tartarus yelled, "Stop!" They looked at him, confused, until he said, "They are mine." He rushed forward, bringing his hammer to swing. Darman was immediately on his feet and him and Fi together fired at him. It did nothing to him as he swung with a swiftness Darman wasn't expecting. Obviously, neither was Fi as he failed to dodge the hammer and was hit in the side and thrown into the wall, where he lay motionless.

"Fi!" yelled Darman, but his attention was drawn back to Tartarus as he tried to swing at him. The others had joined into the fight and fired at Tartarus until he yelled, "Attack!" And the other aliens joined into the fight. Darman, going toe to toe with Tartarus, was having a difficult time dodging his swings. He was then surprised when he held the hammer at his side and went straight for him. Tartarus grabbed his neck and slowly held him up, choking him. He tried to break free but it was no use, he was too powerful.

"Since you have teamed up with the elites," he growled, "You shall share their same fate." And then, without warning, Tartarus threw him backwards and he felt himself fall into the hole. He heard someone call his name before everything went black.

* * *

>Author's note:** (_ner vod_ my brother) This is one of my longer ones, if not longest, chapter I've written yet. Yes, I know, I did have a lot of scenes in here from Halo 2 but that was for the people who haven't had a chance to play it so they wouldn't get confused. As you could guess, the Chief makes his return in the next chapterâ€| Damn it's gonna be good writing from his POV again.

Anyways, please review, I appreciate feedback!

25. Revelations

****Author's note:**** More replies

Darth Red: No don't worry Darman's not dead, you find out what happens to him in this chapter.

Warrior of Virtue: You'll find out in this chapter what happens.

Bet you weren't expecting that one, huh? Yeah I told you updates would be faster, and this is the first chapter in a long time I haven't had to apologize for a long update XD. Well, enjoy the chapter.

* * *

>Revelations

The Chief slowly opened his eyes, trying to adjust to the darkness. The last thing he remembered was a bright flash of light and then falling. Was he dead? But when his eyes adjusted to the darkness he realized that if he was dead, he was surely in hell.

"Whatâ€¦is that?" asked Cortana from inside his helmet speakers. So he wasn't dead, not yet anyway. He stared at the huge form in front of him, its tentacles wrapped around the Chief's body and holding him in the air. He tried to break free but it was a useless gesture.

"I? I am a monument to all your sins," it replied, its voice deep and raspy, almost like a demon itself. Suddenly to his right he saw an elite be brought in, its hands and legs wrapped by what looked like a Flood form, maybe even its leader if it was even possible. The elite struggled to release itself before the Chief interrupted him,

"Relax, I'd rather not piss this thing off."

"Demon!" he said in surprise, finally noticing the Chief hanging next to him. Suddenly the Flood leader brought in another figure the Chief wasn't expecting to see.

"Darman?"

Darman saw him and yelled, "Chief! You're alive!" Then he saw the Flood leader and said, "Oh man."

Suddenly the Flood started speaking again, "This one is machine and nerve," and he wrapped a tentacle around the Chief's head, "And has its mind concluded." The Chief pulled the tentacle from his face in time too see the Flood address Darman.

"This one is but a copy, and its mind tempered with."

"What? How does he know I'm a clone?" asked Darman in disbelief. The Chief had no clue, had no clue how the Flood knew any of them. _It must have been watching us_, thought the Chief.

"This one is but flesh and faith," the leader said, now addressing the elite, "and is the more deluded."

"Kill me or release me parasite," the elite said boldly, "But do not waste my time with talk."

"There is much talk," replied the Flood, "and I have listened, through rock and metal and time. Now I shall talk, and you shall listen."

Suddenly the Flood brought up two different figures. One made the Chief's adrenaline spike as he saw a Monitor that looked a lot like 343 Guilty Spark from the first Halo, who had tried to kill him. The other he saw was the Prophet of Regret, which confused him since he had already killed him.

"Greetings!" said the Monitor cheerfully, "I am 2401 Penitent Tangent. I am the monitor of installation 05."

"And I am the Prophet of Regret," he said, "Councilor most high, Hierarch of the Covenant!"

Tangent then spotted the Chief. "A reclaimer? Here?" the Chief remembered the name Guilty Spark had given him on the first Halo, which made him immediately not trust the little robot, "At last. We have much to do. This facility must be activated if we are to control this outbreak."

"Stay where you are!" ordered Regret, "Nothing can be done until my sermon is complete!"

"Not true," said Tangent, "This installation has a successful utilization record of 1.2 trillion simulated and one actual. It is ready to fire on demand."

Regret then turned to the elite, his voice harsh, "Of all the objects our lords left behind, there are none so worthless as these oracles! They know nothing of the Great Journey!"

"And you know nothing about containment," Tangent replied with an annoyed tone, "You have demonstrated complete disregard for even the most basic protocols."

"This one's containment," the Flood cut in, holding up Tangent, and then held up Regret and said, "and this one's Great Journey are the same."

Regret and the Monitor were then lowered where you could hear Regret screaming and the Chief didn't want to imagine what he just did to him.

Then the Flood leader looked directly at the elite, "Your Prophets have promised you freedom from a doomed existence, but you will find no salvation on this ring. Those who built this place knew what they wrought; do not mistake their intent or all will perish as they did before."

"This thing is right," said the Chief, deciding to cut in, "Halo is a weapon. Your Prophets are making a big mistake."

The elite turned to glare at him, "Your ignorance already destroyed one of the sacred rings, demon. It shall not harm another."

"If you will not hear the truth," said the Flood leader, giving in, "then I will show it to you." He lifted his head and spoke, "There is still time to stop the key from turning, but first it must be found." Then the Flood addressed the Chief and Darman, "You two will search one likely spot," then he turned to the elite, "and you will search another. Fate had us meet as foes, but this ring will make us brothers." Suddenly, the Chief felt the familiar sensation of about to be transported and sure enough a moment later, all three of them were transported away from the Flood leader.

* * *

>It had been an hour since the Attero had stopped and they had received the message from Miranda. They tried sending a message back, but it was no use since the other end wasn't receiving. They also hadn't found out what had been on the radar. It was still there, but yet it wasn't showing itself.

Now everyone in the room proceeded to keep themselves occupied, the commandos, Spartans, and Adams practicing moves in one corner while Etain, Obi-wan, and Gett sat aside, discussing something.

"Show me that again," said Boss, who was in the "rink" with Kelly. They had set up a square to be the boundary for the fights, and at the moment Boss and Kelly were going at it. Kelly showed him the move again, dropping down to kick him in the legs, as she did Boss tried to jump to avoid it but she quickly jumped up and whipped her leg around, catching Boss in the side of the head.

"I couldn't to that if I tried," said Fixer, watching them.

"As you can tell she's the fastest of the group, whenever she faces us she slows down just to give us a chance," said Fred.

"Let me do it," said Sev, getting up.

"Don't be stupid, Sev," said Adams, "You're half her speed." Boss smiled, Adams was right of course, Kelly would bring him down in a second. And also, he smiled about how much he fit into the group now. When they had first been in the Pelican, it had been kind of awkward and now he could make fun of a commando without getting a black eye in return. He was a lucky Marine.

"I can take her," said Sev, being headstrong as usual. Boss backed up to watch.

"This ought to be good," said Will.

"Don't go easy on me," said Sev, falling into the fighting stance.

"You sure?" asked Kelly, who copied his stance. They circled each other for a little bit then Kelly struck as fast as lightning, hitting him in the side of the head. Sev had no time to react and stumbled a little bit to the side.

"Good block there, Sev," said Scorch, laughing. Sev ignored him and

went for a punch to the stomach. She sidestepped quickly, turned around and grabbed his neck from behind.

"That's not a good move to be in, Sev," pointed out Boss mildly, knowing well enough that would just get Sev's temper going. Sev grabbed her hand and pushed up on her elbow, making her let go where he spun around and tried to get a punch to the side of the head but she just ducked and got him in the stomach. Boss could tell from years of being around Sev that his temper was starting to get the best of him as he swung wildly at Kelly.

"Control you temper, Sev," said Boss.

Sev backed up a bit and took a deep breath, "Sorry." Kelly came after him and kicked him in chest. He grabbed her foot but she retaliated by doing a roundhouse kick to his head, forcing him to drop her foot. Shaking stars out of his head she rushed at him and kicked his legs, causing him to fall over and she put her foot on his neck, finishing the fight.

Sev held up his hands, "Alright, I admit it, you're fast and you beat me." Kelly removed her foot and helped him up.

"And don't forget it," she added, a trace of humor in her voice. Sev walked over and sat down beside Scorch, who patted his shoulder and said, "Nice try, Sev." The relaxing event was cut short when Captain Denello's voice came in over the speaker,

"Fred, Boss, Obi-wan, report to the bridge immediately."

Fred rushed over to the speaker and pressed the button, saying, "We're on our way, sir." The tension in the room rose as Boss and Obi-wan walked over to Fred and they all walked out of the room.

"Sir!" said Fred, and he and Boss saluted while Obi-wan bowed his head respectfully. Captain Denello turned around and saluted back, "At ease. As you could have probably guessed I called you three forward because we have figured out what it was we picked up on the radar."

"What is it, sir?" asked Fred and Boss saw Denello's face crease in worry for a brief moment before answering.

"It's a Covenant fleet," he replied, "We figured out that we came by their rendezvous point before they made the jump to Earth." His words were dragged out, as if he didn't want to admit what was happening.

"How big is it?" asked Obi-wan.

"Bigger then the fleet that attacked Reach," replied Denello regretfully.

"What?" said Fred in disbelief, "We don't possibly have the fire power to hold them off."

"I know," he replied, rubbing his forehead, "That is why we're making the jump to Earth immediately. We have already sent a transmission to Cairo Station, but we're not sure if they received it or not."

"Sir, coordinates are entered and the ship is ready to jump," a Lieutenant announced.

"Commence the jump," ordered Denello without hesitating. Boss felt the floor vibrate and the familiar lurch of the ship entering Slipspace. "Let's just hope to God that we get there before the Covenant." They stood there for a moment in awkward silence until he finally said, "You're dismissed." They saluted, besides Obi-wan, and walked out of the room, a new sense of dread forming in their minds.

"Do you think they noticed us?" asked Fred, "If we can see them on our sensors wouldn't they be able to see us?"

"Let's hope not," replied Boss, "We've got enough to worry about without a whole Covenant fleet breathing down our necks."

"We may be thrown into that situation," said Obi-wan, "Most likely we'll all be sent to Earth to hold back the assault."

"Not unless they glass the planet," muttered Fred, and Boss remembered the Chief mentioning that when they first met and he was telling them his story.

"Glass the planet?" asked Obi-wan.

"The Covenant have these weapons that can completely take out a planet. Not destroy it, but all the water is evaporated, plains burned, it literally looks like a planet of fire and everything melts to make what looks like a sheet of glass over the planet. Hence the term 'glass the planet'."

"How many planets have had this happened?" he asked.

"All except Earth," replied Fred, "It's our only remaining planet."

"Out of how many?"

"Imagine our galaxy having that happen," said Boss, "Every planet glassed except for Coruscant."

Obi-wan remained silent for a moment, the situation that was at hand hitting him at full force, and then replied, "I couldn't begin to imagine." They walked the rest of the way back to the room in silence. When they entered the room there had obviously been a conversation for when they saw them return they immediately went silent.

"What is it?" asked Fixer. As the three of them walked over Boss and Fred each removed their helmets to address their squads, revealing the horrible scar on the side of Boss's face once more.

"We've got some bad news," began Boss, "We figured out what the radar picked up."

"And?" asked Will.

"It's a Covenant fleet that is gathering up before making their next

jump."

"Do you know where they're going?" asked Etain.

"Yes," replied Obi-wan, "to Earth."

"How big is the fleet?" asked Kelly.

"Bigger than the one that attacked Reach," said Fred, his voice cold. They all sat in silence, realizing how desperate the situation had become.

"We'll need help," said Linda, "We should call back the others."

"It's no use, remember?" said Fixer, "We can't reach them."

"The best we can do is call all forces to Earth and hold out from there," said Obi-wan.

"Nothing else we really _can _do," said Boss.

"You know Boss," said Scorch, speaking up, "You never told us where you got that scar from."

"Must have slipped my mind," he replied, and it really had. Being on Halo and fighting the Covenant he hadn't given it a second thought. But Scorch never let things go.

"So, what happened?" Scorch prompted. He thought about not telling them, and then figured there was no point keeping it a secret.

"Alright, I'll tell you," he said, pausing for a moment before continuing, "It's from Sidious's force lightning." There was a tense moment of silence before Obi-wan spoke.

"Darth Sidious was here?" he asked in disbelief.

"He was," replied Boss, "But I think he's gone for now."

"It worries me that he was here at all," said Obi-wan, "What did he ask you?"

"Nothing," said Boss, recalling the meeting between him and Sidious. In fact, Sidious hadn't asked him anything, not a single thing, just tortured him, "He didn't ask me anything."

"Odd," said Obi-wan, "It must have been an attempt at fear. If you hadn't escaped when you did I'm sure something more terrible would've happened." Boss thought about it and realized he was right, if they hadn't escaped Sidious may have carried out his threat of hurting his squad starting with Fixer.

"Well, whatever happens," said Fred, "Lets hope he doesn't come back."

* * *

>The Chief landed on his feet with Darman landing beside him and

figured out right away they were behind enemy lines.<p><p>

There were Covenant everywhere, including two of the Prophets at the end of the room. They had obviously been transported into some sort of high council room. The Chief looked around and saw lone grunt staring at him, the fear apparent in its eyes.

"Boo," he said, and the grunt gave a scream and ran away. Darman gave a chuckle and the Chief saw the grunt drop a needler, which he quickly picked up and aimed at the Prophets, but then the Prophet of Truth yelled to the Covenant in the room,

"Kill the Demon!" He and Mercy then disappeared into a chamber in the floor and two brute guards came up to the Chief.

"Brutes!" said Cortana. The Chief brought up his needler and fired at one of the brutes, who was carrying what looked like a plasma rifle but red. The needles stuck in its side and exploded but it didn't do much as it returned fire and the Chief was forced to dodge it. He then let out a torrent of needles at the brute, which let off a huge explosion, killing the brute.

"They don't have shield generators, but take them out before," she paused as the brute dropped his gun and charged, "its beserking!"

"Fierfek!" yelled Darman as he rolled to the side to avoid the oncoming brute. The Chief leaped forward and hit the brute in the back of the head with the needler, but was surprised when it whirled around and struck him across the face with a strength he'd never felt before. As he struggled to gain his balance he saw Darman out of the corner of his eye pick up the plasma rifle and fire at the brute. The Chief quickly combined with it the needler and in a moment the brute lay on the ground, dead.

"I forgot how strong those things are," said the Chief.

"You've fought them before?" asked Darman.

"Yes, on a mission to take out a Covenant fleet that had been on its way to Earth. The brutes killed one of my Spartans."

"I'm sorry," said Darman, staring at the brute. Just then a voice, which sounded like a brutes, came over the loudspeaker.

"The demon has infiltrated the council chamber! Protect the Hierarchs! Seal the exits!"

"Oh I don't think so," replied Cortana, which the Chief knew that she'd be able to open the doors.

But he was surprised when Darman said, "Tartarus!"

"You know him?" asked the Chief.

"Yeah, he's the reason why I ended up with you guys," he replied, "I hope he didn't hurt the others."

"Who was with you?" asked the Chief as he started making his way toward the door.

"Atin, Fi, Johnson, and Commander Keyes," he said following the Chief, and then added, "And Kal and Ordo, but you don't know them."

"What about Delta Squad and Kelly?" he asked as he reached the door.

"The Spartans, Delta, and two of the Jedi went back to Cairo Station and Earth since Lord Hood needed reinforcements," Darman replied, coming up beside him.

"Wait, did you just say _Spartans_?" asked the Chief, looking at him.

"Oh yeah, you don't know, we found Fred, Will, and Linda all on Delta Halo with some people from our time. It was right after the structure was blown up."

The Chief couldn't believe it, his Spartans were still alive. He had no clue how but he would just have to ask them when he got the chance. He decided to ask him about the others.

"So you said Jedi, right? The people who can use the Force?"

"Yeah," he replied, "They were with the Spartans. There were three but one of them, Bardan Jusik, was wounded so he and Niner are still on _In Amber Cl_- " He then cut himself off.

"What? What is it?" asked the Chief.

"Niner and Jusik are stuck on _In Amber Clad_!" he said in horror, "They have no way to get off!"

* * *

>As Niner woke up he felt better than he had since he arrived here, the wounds were obviously healing. He sat up and stretched, hoping for the umpteenth time that he was out with his squad in the Library. It was boring when you had nothing to do except lay in bed.<p><p>

"Bored?" asked Jusik from the other bed, sitting pretzel style and leaning back on his hands. He had his shirt off and was bandaged across the stomach where he had been shot during Order 66.

"Yeah," he replied, "I've never been more bored in my life."

"It could be worse," he replied, and then grinned, "You could be dead."

"Don't remind me," he said, lying back down on the bed with his arm on his forehead, "I wonder what they're doing right now."

"Who, Omega?" when Niner nodded he said, "Probably out killing some Covenant."

"Wish I could be with em," he said, swinging his legs over the side of the bed and standing up, "I feel fit enough to fight now."

"Maybe you should talk to the nurse and find out," said Jusik.

"Alright, I will, be back in a bit," he said and walked out of the room. He still didn't have this ship mapped out but he decided to go to the bridge and ask them where he could find the nurse, they'd probably help him. He followed the signs that said "To the Bridge" which was easy enough. But on the way he felt confused when the ship started moving. It shouldn't be unless the Commander was back, but he doubted it. He moved even quicker, almost running to the bridge. When he got there he opened the door where he stared wide eyed at the creatures that were in there

They were mutated beings that looked almost human, and the horrible thing was that none of the bridge crew were here. He tried to leave quietly but one of the three turned and saw him, letting out a bone-chilling screech.

"Fierfek!" he said and turned and ran, trying to reach him and Jusik's quarters. The creatures leaped in pursuit, they were fast, but not fast enough to catch him as he swerved through the hallways, causing them to run into walls. When he saw the door he dove in and instantly tried to slam it shut.

"What are you doing!" asked Jusik in alarm, but as Niner tried to shut the door one of the arms reached through the door, which was mutated with elongated fingers like whips. Jusik reacted immediately, activating his lightsaber and cutting the arm off so Niner could shut the door and lock it.

"What were those?" asked Jusik in alarm.

"I don't know," replied Niner, backing away from the door, "But I got to the bridge and they were all there, and I think they killed the crew."

"Are we all that's left?" he asked.

"There's gotta be someone," said Niner, hoping they weren't the only two left. Just then there was a loud banging on the door and it rattled violently. Whatever was on the other side was going to get through the door and soon.

"Jusik, I need a weapon," he said.

"Here," Jusik replied, walking to the counter they had in their room and opening a drawer. In it was a gun, "It's the battle rifle I picked up earlier, use it." He tossed it to Niner, who caught it and thumbed off the safety. He brought it up and aimed it at the door, ready for when the creatures broke through. Jusik already had his lightsaber activated and was holding in his fighter position, the lightsaber sticking up in a vertical position. There were a few more bangs on the door then it went quiet, as if they gave up, but Niner knew better and sure enough a moment later a thunderous bang echoed around the room and the door flew inward, clipping Niner in the side of the head a leaving a cut up his cheek. He shook it off and together he and Jusik rushed forward to fight the creatures that had just leaped through the door.

* * *

>Author's note:** Well, I finished this on my birthday so that's kinda funny. But other than that no announcements except thanks to B0baFett for the chapter title since I'm running out of ideas ;-).

26. Friendly Fire

Author's note: More replies.

dragonmaster1992: I could consider doing that, but I don't know for sure. And thanks for all the reviews.

CT-325: Crap, I screwed that up. Thanks for the heads-up, and I'll try to fix it in later chapters.

Longer update than last time, but shorter than what I usually do. I realized I got a lot of good reviews from the past two chapters so thanks a bunch for those, I always appreciate it. Just to let you all know, after this chapter I'll just reply to reviews in those private messages things. Well, that's it, here's chapter 26.

* * *

>Friendly Fire

As Fi sat up every part of his body groaned in protest. The last thing he remembered was him and Darman firing at Tartarus, then getting caught in the side with the hammer and thrown into the wall, where he had fallen into unconsciousness. He shook his head and tried to stand up, using the wall for support. When he was standing he figured out quickly that he had a couple of broken ribs. He also realized that he was standing in what looked like to be a cell with an energy shield blocking the doorway. He wondered what happened to everyone else, and decided to take a look in the other cells, but what he saw surprised him.

There were hunters and elites in the cells, not humans. Why would they imprison their own kind? But then he saw a familiar face among the aliens.

"Atin!" he whispered, "Hey, Atin, wake up!" He thought he hadn't heard him until he raised his head where he was sitting against the wall. When he saw Fi he was instantly on his feet.

"You alright?" asked Atin.

"Just a couple of broken ribs," replied Fi, "Do you know where the others are?"

"Well, Darman fell down that hole so I don't know what happened to him," he said with a hint of worry in his voice, "Then the rest of us got captured, I think they said something about taking them to a place called High Charity."

"Quiet humans!" snarled a voice in the cell next to him. He looked over and saw an elite wearing blue armor, making it appear that it was very lowly ranked.

"Hey, if you haven't noticed we're all trapped in these cells together," Fi replied, "We're on the same side, you know." The elite just snorted and backed up into his cell where he couldn't see him. "Someone's in a bad mood," said Fi.

"I would be too if I was in his position," replied Atin, looking at the elite's cell.

"Why?"

"Weren't you listening to anything Tartarus said?" he asked.

"No, I was too busy being knocked upside the head with a hammer."

"No, I mean before that, when he was talking to that elite, the Arbiter I think."

"How do you know his name?" asked Fi, surprised.

"I've been listening to some of the conversations in here," he replied, "But that's not the point, before he attacked Tartarus was talking about how the elites no longer belong to the Covenant, and his race, the brutes, were going to kill them all."

"You are right," said the elite from earlier, walking back up so they could see him, "The brutes have already murdered the high council and are moving down from there until each one of my race is destroyed."

"So, what are they doing in here?" asked Fi, pointing to the hunters in the cell beside Atin.

"They have allied with the elites, along with the grunts," the elite said, "It has become a civil war within the Covenant." Fi nodded, an awkward silence settling in until he asked,

"What's your name?"

The elite didn't answer for a moment, then said, "Jeno 'Netamee"

"The name's Fi," he replied, and then pointed to Atin, "and that's Atin." Jeno acknowledged it with a nod, his mandibles clicking. Just then the door to the room opened and four brutes entered with a couple of jackals following them.

"Oh great," Fi muttered, eyeing the brutes.

One of them heard him and turned to glare at him, "What did you say human?"

"What?" he asked, trying to look innocent, "I didn't say anything."

The brute snorted, "You won't be when General Grievous comes to pick you up." Now Fi really was silent.

"What's with the sudden protection?" asked Atin from the other side of the room.

"Like I'd tell you," replied one of the brutes.

"You look stupid enough too," said Fi, and he saw Atin put his head in his hand, shaking it.

"One more word out of you-" the brute snarled but Fi cut him off.

"Or you'll what? Lay on me? Cause I'm pretty sure if you did that you'd kill me."

The brute, now furious, deactivated the shield and charged at Fi, who was waiting for this. As soon as he swung at him, he dodged to the side and ejected his vibroblade that lay hidden in his wrist. He stabbed it right in the side of the brutes head, twisting it. The brute's howl of pain was cut short as it fell to the ground in a heap, dead. He was about to rush out of the cell when the other brutes were instantly on him, one brute grabbing its fallen comrade while the other two grabbed Fi's arms and held him against the back wall of the cell.

"You'll regret that, human," said one of the brutes and as he finished his sentence he hit Fi in the stomach as hard as he could. He tried to bend over, the pain doubled by his broken ribs, but they held him up and continued to beat on him. Then what they did next surprised him as one grabbed the top of his helmet and ripped it off. Now they proceeded beating his across the face and every other part of his body they could reach until he lay on the floor, unmoving. The brutes laughed and walked out of his cell, reactivating the energy shield.

"Fi!" yelled Atin, "Come on, speak to me!"

"Quiet, human!" yelled one of the brutes, "Or you will end up like him." Fi felt broken everywhere and he could actually feel the bruises forming on his body. He couldn't get up, couldn't move.

"You must get up, hu- I mean Fi," he heard Jenno whisper to him from the cell next to him, "You have to show them you have not given up or you will be killed." Fi knew he was right, and he had to get up to defend himself if they made another attack. He struggled, putting his hands by his shoulders, pushing himself up, ignoring the pain it caused. With much effort he was able to get himself into a kneeling position. He looked around for his helmet and found it lying in the corner. He grabbed it and put it on, glad to have his HUD back. One of the brutes glanced in his direction and snorted, but fortunately they did not attack him again.

"Let's hope things get better from here," muttered Fi.

* * *

>Niner and Jusik didn't hesitate as they ran forward to meet the oncoming mutants, Jusik swinging his lightsaber right through them while Niner gave him supporting fire. In minutes they were lying on the ground in pieces. The two of them stood there for a moment, speechless, when Jusik finally spoke up.<p><p>

"Are you sure there's no one else here?" Niner didn't answer for a

second, thinking of everyone who had come. Omega, Kal, Ordo, and all the marines except Adams went to the Library while Delta, the Spartans, and the Jedi had gone back to Cairo. He thought hard, thinking he had missed someone when it came to him.

Dr. Halsey.

She had requested to come with them at the beginning, and had remained on In Amber Clad while the others had gone off to fight.

"Dr. Halsey," said Niner aloud, "She was a scientist that came with us, we've got to find her."

"Where would she be?" he asked.

"Probably around here, since these are the living quarters," he said, thinking aloud, "If not probably in a lab of some sort. But we've got to find her before those things do."

"Alright, then lets hurry," Jusik said and went out the door into the hallway. There were no more of those freaks around but Niner had a feeling it wasn't long before they showed up.

"You go that way," said Jusik, pointing right, "And I'll go this way. We'll be able to check the rooms faster." Niner nodded and took off down the hallway, kicking in every door to every room he saw. He found her in the fifth room, kicking in the door he saw her jump almost out of the chair she had been sitting in.

"What are you doing?" she asked in surprise as she pulled herself together.

"We've gotta get out of here," he said quickly, "These mutant type things have taken over the ship."

"It's the Flood," she said in awe, and then said after seeing Niner confused, "they infect humans and Elites to take over their bodies." She instantly got up to follow Niner.

"Do you know a way off of here?" he asked, moving back down the hallway to find Jusik.

"Escape pods," she replied, and then pointed behind them, "But they're back that way."

"We've got to meet up with Jusik first," he said, "He headed up this way." They kept running, passing their old quarters, when suddenly a Flood form leaped out from a room and slammed Niner into the wall, making stars appear in his eyes. It was right on top of him and he couldn't bring his rifle up in time to defend himself and he certainly knew that Halsey could do nothing so he did the next best thing.

"Jusik!" He hoped he heard him as he brought up his leg and tried to push the Flood off of him so he could use his gun. Suddenly off to his left he heard a lightsaber activated and the Flood was cut cleanly in two and fell to the floor.

"Thanks," said Niner, wiping his forehead as Jusik deactivated his

lightsaber.

"Dr. Halsey, correct?" asked Jusik.

"Yes," she replied, and then to their surprise said, "and you are Niner and Bardan Jusik, are you not?"

"Yes," said Niner, "How'd you know?"

"I try to know all of our allies," she answered simply. There was a sudden sound from down the hallway and then the sound of the Flood running, trying to catch them.

"Come on lets get to the pods," said Niner and led the way back the way they came.

* * *

>The Chief and Darman quickly mowed down the small patrol jackals and brutes that had been waiting for them at the bottom of the lift. Cortana had made so that the gravity lift that usually went up would actually carry them down. The Chief now had a carbine he had picked up from a brute previously while Darman had what they had figured out to be a brute plasma rifle. They had also learned that Truth actually did have the index, and that they had to get it from him.<p><p>

Suddenly Tartarus's voice come over the loudspeakers, "Reinforce all approaches to the holding pens! Slay the demon on sight."

"Oh, sure, leave me out," said Darman.

"What does he mean by holding pens?" asked the Chief.

"I'm not sure, it could mean holding _cells_," replied Cortana, "But be careful you guys, their beefing up their patrols, stay sharp."

"Roger that," said Darman, picking up a few plasma grenades off the ground and stashing them in his ammo belt. They continued on for a couple more minutes when Cortana stopped them.

"Wait a minute! I'm reading marine IFF transponders!" said Cortana, surprised, "The signals are originating somewhere below your position."

"Any related to me?" asked Darman.

"Not that I can tell," said Cortana, "But I may just not be able to pick them up. But if you keep going there's a grav lift in the next room you can use to get down to the cells." The Chief and Darman rushed forward only to be met by a patrol of brutes and jackals. They fired upon them quickly, forcing the two to dive for cover. The Chief saw Darman pull out a grenade and prime it, throwing it at the closest brute. It stuck right to his face, causing it to panic and run right into the other brute standing next to him, causing them to explode in the grenade's onslaught.

"Nice throw," said the Chief, "But we shouldn't worry about these guys, let's rush the grav lift."

"Alright, just let me cause a distraction," said Darman, getting ready to throw another grenade. He primed it and threw it, causing it to land in between a couple of jackals. They screamed and dived away right before it exploded, but as soon as it did the Chief and Darman sprinted inside the small structure in the middle and to the grav lift, where Cortana appeared on the pedestal.

"Hurry, jump in!" she said, and the Chief and Darman jumped in, immediately falling downwards, "There are 2 groups of marines in this detention block. I'll deal with their location; you neutralize the guards quietly." The Chief snorted, when did he ever do things quietly? As they landed the brutes guarding the grav lift turned around in surprise, which left them enough time to shoot the brutes dead. Just then several grunts ran up the ramp that lead to the platform, firing a combination of needlers and plasma pistols. They quickly put them to an end with a few headshots. Right after Cortana spoke up again,

"Come to the middle level, Chief. The marines are just inside. Careful of the guard."

"They won't be a problem," said the Chief and led the way to a set of gravity lifts at the far side of the room and jumped into one, sending him down to the lower level. Darman came down behind him, but as soon as they were both there a brute and jackals that were waiting for them opened fire and the two of them once again were forced to take cover.

"Take out the jackals first," said the Chief, "then we can deal with the brute."

"Copy that," said Darman, rising up to fire a few shots at a jackals shield. It glowed brightly then disappeared, leaving it vulnerable to the head shot the Chief gave it.

"Nice work," said the Chief as he primed a plasma grenade and threw it. He aimed it perfectly, flying through the slot hole in the jackals shield and sticking it, causing it to panic and run into the brute, blowing them both up. With the way clear once again they made their way to the unlocked door. It opened up automatically and inside were rows of cells holding marines captive inside. Towards the far back there was a small area where a brute was walking, holding a brute shot. There were also a few grunts and jackals standing in front of the cells, and they all turned around in alarm as the Chief and Darman walked in guns raised, firing. The Chief managed to get a grunt and a jackal while Darman got two grunts, leaving only two jackals and the brute. The brute turned around, furious, and ran forward and stood next to a cell, ready to fire its brute shot. But to its fatal mistake the brute was standing too close to the wrong cell as an armored gauntlet reached through and injected the vibroblade in its wrist into the brutes head, causing it to fall over, clearly dead. The jackals, having seen the brute killed, panicked and turned to fire at the cell, exposing their backs to the Chief and Darman, who fired on them mercilessly. With the guards dead, Cortana opened the cells to reveal three marines and a person who the Chief didn't know.

"Nice one there, Ordo," said Darman, walked up the figure who had white armor with red markings, wearing what resembled a skirt.

"Good to see your okay," said Ordo, "But what were you thinking?"

Darman shrugged, "I don't know, it was the spur of the moment I guess."

"What'd you do?" asked the Chief.

Ordo turned to look at him for the first time, "So you're the Master Chief everyone's been asking about?"

"Yes," he replied, registering that Ordo wasn't someone to mess with.

"About your question," said Darman, "We had just retrieved the Index when that elite we saw earlier attacked us. He almost had Keyes when Tartarus grabbed her and took the Index, started talking about how the brutes were going to wipe out the elites starting with him. He was about to kill him whenâ€¦ I stepped forward to protect him."

"You protected the elite?" asked the Chief in surprise.

"Like I said before, it just felt like the right thing to do at the moment," he said defensively.

"You almost got yourself killed," said Ordo.

"Never mind me, what about the others?" he asked.

"Everyone's here except for Fi and Atin," he replied.

"Wait, Cortana, you said there was another group of Marines here, right?" asked the Chief.

"Yes, on the lower level," she replied, making Ordo look around.

"Is there anyone else besides the Marines?"

"Scanningâ€¦" she said, pausing for a moment, "There is a man there who isn't registered as UNSC."

"That's gotta be Sarge," said Darman, looking at Ordo, "And by the way, that's Cortana. The Chief's AI who's in the system at the moment."

"Okay, intros are done, how bout we go help Kal out?" said Ordo.

"Sounds good to me," said the Chief, "And afterwards we need to go after Truth."

"We're hunting the Prophet?" asked one of the Marines, holding a needler and whose tag on his chest read 'Cpl. Corrin', "Alright what are we waitin' for?"

"Let's go then," said the Chief, and the others followed him. He figured Ordo was only following him since this wasn't his own Galaxy. They went to the gravity lifts and went to the lower level, where they

quickly dispersed of the patrol of grunts there.

"They're in here guys," she said, appearing on a pedestal outside a door. They quickly ran in, guns raised, Ordo with his newly acquired plasma rifles, and quickly killed off the jackals and grunts, who were outnumbered greatly, leaving only the brute. It quickly threw down it's gun as soon as it realized it was alone and charged, hitting the Chief against a cell, bending the bars. Ordo kicked the brute off of him, and together they fired at it. With a cry of pain it fell to its knees and then to the ground where it lay motionless.

"Nice shooting there, boys!" called a man from the cell the Chief had been thrown into. They turned to see who the Chief assumed was Kal.

"Cortana?" asked the Chief.

"On it," she replied and the cell doors opened, letting out two Marines and Kal. The Sergeant instantly walked up to Darman and thumped him on the head.

"Don't scare me like that, _di'kut_! I thought you were dead against that thing!"

"Come on, Sarge, you know me," said Darman.

"Yeah, you don't think before you leap, son," he replied, sighing and shaking his head.

"I'm alive and well," said Darman, "and unscathed, can't ya at least be thankful for that?"

"Sorry to interrupt," said Ordo, "But if this Prophet guy we're going after is on the move, he's probably gained a lot of ground on us during these rescues."

"He is right," said Cortana, talking from the pedestal, "I'm able to track him since he's broadcasting on the move, and he's moved a lot while we were in here."

"Then we'll continue this later," said Kal, and they headed out of the cells to return to hunting down Truth.

* * *

>As soon as the Attero came out of Slipspace it headed toward Cairo Station, where it landed in the hangar bay. As Boss walked out a plasma shot barely missed his head by inches and he spun around to see a group of jackals waiting near the door, shields up. Another jackal fired a charged plasma shot and it nailed him square in the chest, taking down his shields completely. He staggered backward, gritting his teeth against the pain. His wound was still there from Grievous's lightsaber and getting a blast from a charged plasma shot didn't feel all to great. Someone then grabbed his shoulder and pulled him back. He looked to see it was Obi-wan, lightsaber activated, as he moved forward in front of Boss. The jackals fired now continuous shots but Obi-wan was able to block them with his lightsaber as Fred, Scorch, Kelly, and Sev moved forward, the only ones able to fit in the small door, and returned fire.

"You alright?" asked Fixer, who appeared as his shoulder.

"Yeah, just that didn't help my wound at all," he replied, rubbing his chest. Soon they had the four jackals laying on the ground riddled with bullets.

"This has gotten worse since we left," said Sev, "They were just boarding but now they have made it all the way to the hangar."

"We better move quickly to the bridge," said Obi-wan, "and see if they got the transmission about the fleet, and then see where we're most needed."

"Lets go," said Fred and he led the way to the bridge, following the signs. They didn't meet as much Covenant as they thought they would and Boss was beginning to think that they'd get there easily, but he thought wrong as they entered the next room.

There were at least three patrols of Covenant, each consisting of two elites, four jackals, and three grunts. There were even a pair of hunters there. But, luckily, they had not noticed them enter the room cause currently on the other end of the room there was a squad of Helljumpers pinned down, wearing their black armor and helmets, desperately trying to fight them back.

"Oh, fierfek," said Scorch.

"I think we need our snipers," said Fred, looking at Linda and Sev.

"Finally, its about time," said Sev, pulling out his sniper rifle while Linda did the same.

"Ill get the left and you get right?" suggested Linda, "and we'll each take a hunter. Don't get selfish."

"Sounds good to me," replied Sev, kneeling down behind a box that was sitting there and resting his sniper on top of it, "And I never get selfish."

Boss heard Scorch snort, and he had to agree with him. Sev being so headstrong, he'd probably try to take both hunters if in a different situation. But with the Helljumpers pinned, and them being out in the open, he hoped that Sev had the common sense not to do it.

"Alright, lets do it," said Linda, setting up her own sniper on a pile of rubble. Sev's reply was a shot from his sniper, nailing the hunter in it's weak spot in the back, making it fall over. Linda fired only a half second later, her hunter meeting the same fate. Three of the elites turned around at the sound, one gold and the other two red. The gold elite roared in anger at seeing the dead hunters and ignited it's energy sword, but Linda and Sev finished him off with four shots from the sniper. As if issued a silent command the group opened fire on the Covenant, a mixture of snipers, battle rifles, and SMGs.

"Grenades on my mark!" yelled Boss over the gunfire, and everyone who had a grenade pulled it out, "Mark!" They all threw them into the

mass of Covenant, and when they went off it created one giant explosion, vaporizing a quarter of the Covenant and exploding half into nearby walls or boxes, sending blood and gore everywhere. After that there was only one red elite, three jackals and two grunts left. The Helljumpers then proceeded to leap from cover and help them finish off the last of the Covenant. One of them leaped behind the elite that was firing at Boss and grabbed its head, twisting it and breaking its neck. Soon the Covenant lay everywhere in the room, their bodies piled up. The Helljumpers crawled over the rubble to them.

"You really saved our asses back there," said one, "The names Corporal Brettan."

Fred walked forward, "Fred, but how bad are things here?"

"They're all over us, their boarding parties have doubled since they first started and more and more ships are making it through to Earth. If we lose Cairo, we're definitely screwed."

"Then I'm pretty sure you don't want to hear our news."

"What?"

Fred told him about the Covenant Fleet, and how it was on its way to Earth.

"Oh no," said Brettan, his helmet shaking back and forth, "Oh man, its all over."

"Its not over," said Boss, stepping forward, "If we get enough ground forces to repel the troops, and keep Cairo alive, we've still got a fighting chance."

Brettan looked at him, "But, if they glass itâ€¦" He let the sentence trail off, all of them knowing what would happen if the Covenant did.

"We shouldn't concentrate on that," said Obi-wan, "we need to get to the bridge and alert Lord Hood of the situation."

"We'll give you support," said Brettan, bringing his gun to bear, overcoming his sudden hopelessness of the situation.

"Good," said Fred, "I was hoping you would, now lets go and tell Lord Hood. Then we can prepare for whatever's coming at us."

* * *

>Author's note: I would've had this done sooner but I've had so many problems with it, first Microsoft Word expired and then Works wouldn't work and man it just delayed me about a week, plus a really bad writers block. A huge thanks to PFC Koprulu, or as I better know him as LinkMasta from RvB, for helping me with my writers block. Please tell me what you think, cause I like to know who still reads it.

****Author's note:**** Holy crap no replies! Haha, but be wary of what POV its from, cause it does switch a lot back and forth, especially towards the end. And I'm sorry to say that there is no Delta Squad or the Spartans in this chapter, just couldn't fit them in since it mostly concentrates on the Chief's group and Niner's group. Well, here it is.

* * *

Intruding on a War

As Grievous walked back into the base on Jecovah, he had a sudden feeling of regret coming here, but he pushed it aside. He needed to report to Lord Sidious about what has happened since he allied with the Covenant, plus he needed more droids since that last battle on Delta Halo. He only had 20 left.

As he walked through the hallways to the Prophets chamber he saw the burn marks and explosions that showed what had taken place in the past few days. That only infuriated him at the amount of times the clones have slipped through his fingers, and now with Kenobi and the other Jedi here it will be difficult to get at them at all. He walked into the chamber, and saw the portal off to his right where Sidious had made some changes to it.

The portal was much larger as it would be difficult to have 100 plus droids walking in through the small opening it had before. And also, he had enabled it so beings with_out _shields could pass through, which Grievous wished he hadn't as maybe the Jedi would've died when they walked through it. He was about to activate his Holo projector and contact Sidious when he noticed a sound. It was a heavy, mechanical breathing, and it made him furious.

"I do _not_ need your help," Grievous said fiercely, looking towards the sound.

"It seems to me like you do," a voice in the shadows replied, and the figure walked forward. He had black body armor on, with a black cape and mask, all sealed to help him breathe, "Lord Sidious sent me to help you."

"Oh really?" said Grievous, "What was your name again?"

"Darth Vader," he replied, "But I am someone you used to know all too well."

"I'm sure," said Grievous dismissively, continuing to activate the projector.

Vader walked over to him and said, "You're a bit shorter than I expected." It took Grievous a moment to register what he meant, and when he did his eyes widened in surprise to stare at him.

"Skywalker? The puny Jedi?"

"I once was, but I have come over to the Dark side. I am on _your _side now, General."

He snorted, "Oh, goody."

"And you don't need to contact Sidious," said Vader, "He says you must concentrate on killing the commandos. I am to take care of the Jedi."

"One on three? I'm sure you can handle it," Grievous replied sarcastically, putting away the Holo projector.

"Do you not remember who destroyed every Jedi in the temple?" he asked.

"Yes, all the younglings," Grievous said mockingly.

"You couldn't even handle Kenobi, plus these commandos."

"And you could?" challenged Grievous.

Vader remained silent for a moment then replied, "We must not waste time with this bickering, we have jobs to do."

"Sure," said Grievous, following Vader back out of the chamber where the phantom Grievous took here was waiting.

* * *

>"Duck!" yelled Jusik and all three of them bent down as a Flood combat form flew over their heads and with a sickening splathit the wall behind them.

"This is no use, we won't make it to the pods in one piece!" said Halsey, who was bleeding from a cut in her arm where a Flood had attacked her earlier on.

"We need more ammo," said Niner, "I'm almost out. Plus better weapons."

"We need to get to the armory," she replied, "I bet your armor is there too."

"Really?" asked Niner, brightening up.

"Where is it?" asked Jusik.

"Follow me," she replied, turning down the hallway to the right. It seemed more and more Flood were appearing, as if the whole ship crew were against them. They sprinted through the hallways, trying to keep ahead of the Flood but no matter what efforts were made, they always caught back up with them. Two ran down the hallway at them, charging as if they didn't care if they died, or didn't even think about it. Niner was able to drop one of them with his battle rifle while Jusik took the other one out with his lightsaber, two slashes one cutting the head off and the other slicing through the waist.

"How much farther?" asked Niner, "I'm almost dry."

"Just down this hallway," said Halsey, running ahead towards a door.

"Doctor, wait!" yelled Jusik who ran after her. She almost reached a

door when a Flood form leaped out in front of her, carrying a pistol. Halsey jolted to a stop and Jusik leaped forward, cutting off its gun hand. But it brought around its whip hand and caught him across the face, creating four cuts on his cheek. He staggered to the side and the Flood was about to strike again when Niner appeared grabbed its wrist and held on, shaking with the effort since it was so strong. He brought his battle rifle up to its chest with his left hand, stabbing it with the barrel and fired three shots. The Flood's chest exploded out backwards, spattering green blood all over the floor and the walls. Niner ripped out the gun where it fell over, not moving. He then turned to see how Jusik was, and saw four gashes bleeding heavily down his neck where Halsey was helping him up.

"Are you alright?" she asked, examining the wounds.

"I'll be fine," he said, "but lets hurry up and get to the armory." Niner nodded and picked up the pistol the Flood had carried, his rifle was now dry. They walked in, and Niner instantly saw something that made this situation seem possible to get out of.

His commando armor.

He hurried over to it as Halsey shut the door and locked it, "I think there may be a first aid kit we could use in here." While she went rummaging through some drawers at the end of the room Jusik went to check any entrances that the Flood might be able to use.

"I think we're good," he looked over at Niner, who already had half of his armor on, "Wow, you did that fast."

"Its been too long without it," he said, grinning, but was cut off when the ship suddenly started moving faster.

"What's going on?" asked Jusik.

"Oh no," said Halsey, and a moment later they all felt the unmistakable lurch of the ship entering Slipspace.

"I didn't know Flood could pilot ships," said Niner, looking at Halsey.

"I didn't know either," said Halsey, looking bewildered, "John said they could only operate guns."

"Well, we have no clue where we're going so we might as well be ready to abandon ship as soon as we get there."

"Then we'll have to reach the pods soon," said Jusik, "How much farther to those?"

"At the end of the ship," said Halsey, "Twenty minutes at the most."

"Anything closer?" asked Niner, who was putting on his chest plate.

"The Pelicans, maybe," she replied, thinking, "We could take one of those but we'd have to land on that base if we were to survive."

"How long?" asked Jusik.

"Ten minutes."

"Then I say we take those," said Jusik.

"I agree," said Niner, placing his helmet on, "Damn this feels good."

"Alright, lets hurry up and get some weapons," said Jusik.

"The shotgun is the best weapon against the Flood," said Halsey, "but don't forget after we land we could end up fighting the Covenant."

"Right, then lets gear up and go," said Niner.

* * *

>The Chief led the way through the many corridors of High Charity, trying to keep ahead of the Covenant but no matter what their efforts they always seemed to be held up by countless patrols. But the farther they went, the Chief started to realize how much Darman had been right about the brutes turning on the elites. He saw brutes and elites fighting, but not only that grunts fighting jackals and drones. Even once they saw a pair of hunters trying to take down a patrol of brutes.

"This is getting a little out of hand," said Darman, watching a brute and an elite fighting each other with only their hands.

"Seems we intruded on their own little civil war," said Kal.

"It'll at least make it easier for us," said the Chief, "We'll be able to get past unnoticed more often."

"Let them try to attack us," said Ordo, who now had a normal plasma rifle in one hand and a brute plasma rifle in the other.

"I'd rather we avoid contact as much as possible," said the Chief, "Just until we're able to get the index from Truth." The Chief noticed that Ordo was about to argue, but then held himself as he knew very little about this enemy they were dealing with.

"Lets get a move on then." said Kal, "The longer we wait the more chance they're going to notice us slipping through." The Chief nodded and moved forward, able to approach the elite from behind and give it a fatal hit to the back of the head, its shields already weakened. Ordo and Darman moved forward to get rid of the brute, who didn't notice them until the Chief dispatched the elite. It turned around immediately and swung at Darman, who ducked while Ordo ejected his vibroblade and slashed at the brute, cutting through its jugular vein in its neck where it fell to the ground, grasping its neck. The group moved past, not paying any attention to him as they went through the next door, and the Chief stopped abruptly to find that they were outside. Everyone stopped behind him to stare at what he was seeing.

"What the hell is that?" asked Corrin, the Marine from earlier.

"It's a gravity transport," replied Cortana, "Don't worry, it's safe."

"If the Covenant made it, I wouldn't trust it one bit," muttered one of the Marines.

"Well, then you better trust an A.I. or you have no hope left," said the Chief, who ran forward and jumped into the grav transport. As soon as his feet hit it, he felt his body lift and be carried across the opening, landing on the other side. There were some elites waiting for him, along with a few grunts. He gave covering fire to the others as they made their way across, and when they met up with them they moved forward to take out the elites. The Chief fired at a blue elite with his carbine, trying to destroy the shields. The elite was being stubborn, refusing to back down and firing back. Then the Chief felt Ordo move around the box they were taking cover behind, stealthily moving behind the elite. The Chief saw what he was planning to do and dove from cover, hoping to draw the elites attention. He was successful as the elite sprang forward, trying to hit him with his plasma rifle over the Chief's head. But Ordo leapt behind the elite, stabbing his vibroblade into the elite's spine, killing it instantly.

"I don't think I've ever used this thing as much as I have now," said Ordo casually, bringing the blade back into the back of his gauntlet.

"Pretty useful here, aren't they?" asked Darman, kicking another elite in the stomach, causing it to bend over where he broke its neck. The Chief looked over to see if the others needed his help but saw that they had already dispatched of the other two elites and were currently firing on the two grunts, who were screaming in panic at the loss of their leadership. The Chief moved quickly now, knowing that their presence on the Covenant base was well known. They jogged along a path that curved around the left side of the tower and found themselves looking at a ferocious battle between a brute and what looked like an elite honor guard.

The elite, brandishing an energy sword, swung at the brute, cutting across its shoulder. This only succeeded in pissing off the brute as it dropped its gun and sprang into its berserker mode, scoring punches left and right on the unsuspecting elite. In barely any time the elite lay on its back, its purple blood mixing with the water that ran through the middle of the catwalk type path connecting the two towers.

The Chief felt an unsuspected pang of pity for the elite, who was now beaten to death, and began to understand what had motivated Darman to protect the elite. But there was no time to think of that, he moved forward the others following him into the middle of the catwalk, which had three pathways crossing over it where they lead to platforms sticking out of the side. Up ahead there was a brute fighting a small squad of grunts, who to the Chief's surprise were putting up a good fight, not even noticing their squad leader had been slain.

The Chief attacked the first brute, kneeling down and firing his carbine into the brute's head. It fell over, letting out a painful howl. The second brute turned to see what had happened, giving the

grunts a chance to unleash a fury of needles at it. They weren't able to get off enough to kill the brute as he turned around and went berserk on them, immediately killing two of the three grunts. The Chief sprinted forward while Ordo raced beside him, both firing their weapons at the brute as the others followed them and gave them covering fire. The brute, wounded but still alive, whirled around and charged straight at the oncoming group. The Chief and Ordo dodged to the side, where the brute caught one of the Marines off guard. He smacked him in the side of the head, sending him careening off the side of the edge, falling into the bottomless crevice, the Chief only hoping that it ended for the Marine quickly.

"No!" shouted Corrin as he leapt forward out of pure anger and drew a combat knife from his belt, driving it into the brute's shoulder. Far from killing him, it drove him on as the brute punched Corrin in the side of the face, making him fly to the side. By now Kal had come forward to help, firing his plasma rifle point blank at the brute's head, burning it fiercely. The brute, now blind, yowled in agony before it was put to an end by a headshot from the Chief's carbine.

The Chief, walking over the brute's corpse, approached Corrin.

"Are you alright?" he asked, meaning it in more ways than one.

He had blood coming out of his nose along with a black eye that was filled with sorrow, but replied, "I'm fine."

The Chief rested his hand on his shoulder for a moment then continued on, but not before noticing that Kal was looking at him with a new look in his eye, something he couldn't place. But he ignored the feeling and walked by the lone grunt, who was standing beside its two fallen brothers. Ordo ejected his vibroblade and moved forward only to be blocked by the Chief's hand.

"Wait," he said, the grunt looked up at him, "let him be, he has suffered enough." Without looking back he walked forward up the left hand path, heading towards the next battle.

* * *

>Ten minutes after arriving at the armory, Niner, Jusik, and Halsey arrived at Hangar Bay 7, which docked the Pelicans. They sprinted forward towards the nearest Pelican, Jusik and Halsey climbing in while Niner gave them covering fire. The reason being the Flood were right on top of them, a never ending wave as they had raced for the Hangar. Niner brought down two of them with his battle rifle but unlike normal enemies they didn't dive for cover, they kept coming at him at full speed.<p><p>

He turned to climb into the Pelican while Jusik in return gave him covering fire with his newly acquired battle rifle. After hanging around with the commandos on Coruscant he had learned how to use a gun. As soon as Niner's feet touched the Pelican floor the Attero gave a sudden lurch and came out of Slipspace. He looked forward out of the windshield and saw through the Hangar's opening a base of some sort and he could only guess who's it was.

"Oh great, the Covenant."

"Niner!" said Jusik, calling him back to the battle. He whipped around and noticed the Flood were even closer. He brought up his battle rifle and fired alongside Jusik, bringing down Flood form after Flood form.

"Hurry!" called Niner to the cockpit, where Halsey was busy at the controls.

"I have to deactivate the energy shields!" she yelled back, "Give me a minute!"

"We don't have a minute!" he replied, seeing that the Flood were steadily getting closer and closer. Glancing forward, Niner saw that they were also getting closer and closer to the Covenant base, almost flying directly over it.

"This isn't going to end well."

* * *

>"Slipspace rupture," said Cortana from the Chief's helmet, causing everyone to pause, she then said in surprise, "It's In Amber Clad! Hailing |No response."

Truth went on to say something encouraging to the Covenant over the loudspeaker, but was drowned out by _In Amber Clad_'s engines as it flew overhead and out of sight.

"She's crashed into another tower ahead of our position," said Cortana, "I'll keep trying to make contact, but I'm not registering any human life signs." The Chief and Darman looked at each other worriedly, noting that Niner, Dr. Halsey, and Jusik were still on board.

* * *

>"Brace yourselves!" yelled Halsey toward the back of the Pelican. Niner turned and saw that they were heading straight for a tower on the base and turned to grab onto the rungs on the ceiling of the Pelican, Jusik doing the same. A few moments later that was a loud crash and they were all hurled forward by the impact. Niner quickly got up to hold off the Flood, but saw they were too late. The Flood were right on top of them and he had to actually kick them to keep them out.<p><p>

"Retreat into the cockpit!" yelled Niner, helping Jusik up and running backwards. As soon as they were in Halsey shut the door.

"How much longer?" asked Jusik.

"A couple of minutes," she replied, "this Pelican hasn't been used for a while."

"I hope there's not a reason for it," muttered Niner.

* * *

>The Chief and the others hurried onward with a renewed pace, trying to reach Truth and maybe In Amber Clad before it was too

late.

"Hurry!" said the Chief, now nearly sprinting through the doors into the next area. Now Truth and Tartarus were switching back and forth over the loudspeaker, trying to calm down the now fighting Covenant. He kept moving, passing through the door and back outside. He saw a bridge extending across, connecting two different structures. There were many elites and brutes fighting, with a few jackals and grunts.

"If we're going to catch Truth, we'll need to take a shortcut straight through the mausoleum," said Cortana, "Look on the bright side. For now, they seem much more interested in killing each other." The Chief doubted that that would help, but he threw a grenade ahead of him and ran forward, firing the entire way, the others behind him doing the same.

"Just run through, don't fight!" yelled the Chief above the sounds of the battle, dodging around a grappling elite and brute. He hoped Ordo listened to him, expecting him to be smart enough to pass up this battle. He blocked the punch of an elite as he ran by, grabbing its wrist and throwing it down. The Chief thought they were going to be able to get right through until they reached the end. The doors in front of them opened to reveal two elites running out in front of a pair of hunters, both cannons raised.

"Take cover!" yelled the Chief as he, Ordo, and Corrin dived behind one box while Darman, Kal, and the other two Marines that were left took cover on the other side.

"What the hell is that?" yelled Ordo over the sound of gunfire.

"It's a hunter," replied the Chief, "Watch out for it's cannon on its hand." As soon as he finished saying that one of the hunters unleashed a fuel rod blast onto their cover, completely blowing the box to the side. Seeing nowhere to find cover, the three of them drew their weapons and fired at the hunter. It charged at them, raising its shield as a weapon and trying to strike the Chief. He dove to the side, but it caught his leg, causing him to fall to the ground. He rolled over quickly onto his back, realizing too late that this was the wrong move. The hunter was towering above him now, its shield raised to crush the Chief's skull. But then suddenly the hunter's stomach exploded outward, showering the Chief in bright orange blood. The hunter swayed for a moment then started falling forward, making the Chief roll quickly to the right to avoid being crushed by the behemoth. Looking up, he saw Ordo standing there with an energy sword ignited in one hand that was covered in orange blood.

"Where'd you get that?" asked the Chief as Ordo offered a hand, which he took.

"Found it lying over there," he replied, pointing to a spot near the edge.

"Well, thanks," said the Chief, "But we better help the others." Looking over, he saw that they had it partly under control, at least the hunter hadn't blown their cover—literally. Ordo hurried over, gesturing to the Chief to distract the hunter. The Chief brought up his carbine and fired a few shots at the hunter, knowing in any other

situation this would be suicide. The hunter turned toward him, lifting his cannon to unleash a blast on him.

Come on, thought the Chief and a moment later the hunters stomach exploded from the force of the sword driving into its back, killing it instantly.

"You know, your good bait," said Ordo as the others moved quickly moved from their cover to join them.

"Found a new toy there, _Ord'ika_" asked Kal.

"It comes in handy," Ordo replied, examining the blade.

"We better move," said Darman, gesturing behind them where they saw that the brutes has won this battle and were now moving towards them.

"Lets go," said the Chief and ran through the doors where he walked into the mausoleum, and saw a huge battle underway between the brutes and the elites.

"You may want to consider sitting this one out," said Cortana.

* * *

>"Alright, I got it," announced Halsey as she brought the Pelican to bear, taking off and flying out of the hanger and the ruined In Amber Clad. The Flood were constantly banging on the door, trying to break through. Niner hoped it would stop when they took off but it continued, as loud and as hard as ever. There were dents in the door, and it was starting to creak violently with every hit.

"It's not going to hold," said Niner, bringing out his shotgun to defend the cockpit. Jusik activated his lightsaber now that they were in close quarters. There were a few more bangs and then a single loud one and the door became seriously dented, creating an opening in the corner. A Flood stuck a hand through it, groping around trying to reach something. Jusik quickly amputated it which was followed by a screech on the other side of the door.

"What's going on?" asked Halsey, who was busy at the controls.

"Flood want to see the view from the cockpit," replied Niner trying to hit the door shut with his fist. It was no use as the Flood hit back with more and stronger hits, slowly loosening the doors hold on the frame.

"Back up Niner," said Jusik, "That door smacking against your face wouldn't feel good." Niner backed up, knowing that is was useless to continue trying to put the door back in place, the frame was busted. He decided to do the next best thing and aim his shotgun at door while Jusik readied his lightsaber. A couple of minutes went by and the pounding kept going, a relentless almost rhythmic noise, jarring the door more lose every time. There was a sudden pause in the beating and the a sudden _bang _and the door came clean off, flying towards them. Niner caught it before it hit Halsey in the back of the head and shoved it at the Flood, hoping to keep them back. Jusik slashed fiercely with his lightsaber, trying to kill them before they

even got in the cockpit but one slipped past and charged at Niner. It hit him across the shoulder, but with his armor to protect him he barely felt it as he unleashed a shotgun round. It hit the Flood in the arm, blowing it clear off, but noticing Halsey in the pilots seat it charged at her instead.

Unable to shoot the Flood in fear of hitting her in the small cockpit, he yelled, "Duck!" She turned around and saw it charging right at her and went wide-eyed before she bent over, the Flood's whip hand slashing across the controls. Niner leaped forward and grabbed it around its neck, ejecting his vibroblade from his gauntlet into its back. It fell to the ground while Halsey righted herself to continue to fly, but then a look of horror crossed her face.

"What is it?" he asked.

"That Flood destroyed the controls, there's no way to land it!"

* * *

>The Chief finished off the last brute from a sniper beam from his beam rifle he had picked up earlier.<p><p>

"Hang on!" Cortana said, surprised, "I'm picking up 2 more transponders. It's the Commander and Johnson! They're closing on Truth's position, Chief. They'll need your guys help."

"Any others?" asked Darman.

"Sorry, there are none," she replied.

"Don't worry, we'll find them," said Kal, patting Darman on the shoulder. The Chief ran through the door on the opposite end of the Mausoleum which opened up to a path leading to another door. Luckily there was no one else here.

"This isn't good," said Cortana again through the Chief's helmet speakers, "I'm getting confirmed reports the Flood are leaving In Amber Clad's wreckage. Let's get the Index and find a way out of here, before things get really ugly." They headed through the door and back outside where there was a grav lift leading downwards. They all hopped in, but as the Chief reached the bottom he saw three Phantoms taking off and swore to himself.

They had missed Truth.

But there was something else he saw noticed, the Prophet of Mercy was struggling on the platform with an infection form attached to his neck, slowly eating away at him. He realized that the others had left him here to die.

Some Covenant, he thought. He walked over to Mercy and asked,

"Your pal, where's he going?"

Mercy didn't answer him for a second, then replied, "Earth. To finish what we started. And this time, none of you will be left behind." The Chief knelt down then to rip off the infection form, crushing it in his hand. But Mercy made strangling sounds until with one last breath

he died. He stayed there for a moment, but then others had gathered around and saw Mercy.

"Ugly thing, isn't he?" said Kal.

Cortana then appeared on Mercy's throne and they all looked at her, "That structure in the center of the cityâ€¦it's a Forerunner ship! And Truth is heading straight for it. If he leads the Covenant fleet to Earth, they won't stand a chance. You have to stop him!"

The Chief stood back up, "That brute, Tartarus, has the index. And Miranda and Johnson, he can activate the ring."

"Activate it?" asked Ordo, "As in it's a weapon?"

"Yes," replied Darman, "It can destroy all life in the galaxy."

"Wait, and the Covenant want to activate it?" asked Kal, "Wouldn't it kill them too?"

"Yes, but they don't realize the true power of Halo."

"If he does activate it, I'll detonate _In Amber Clad_'s reactor just like we did the _Autumn_'s. The blast will destroy this city and the ring," said Cortana, "Not a very _original_ plan, but we know it'll work." The Chief reached forward to grab her chip but she interrupted him, "No. I don't want to chance a remote detonation. I'll stay here." The Chief didn't like the idea of that as he pulled away, they would need her in the future, but he also agreed with her. Just then, a Pelican roared overhead and crashed onto the platform next to theirs and the Chief's adrenaline spiked as he saw many Flood combat forms pour out of the back.

* * *

>Author's note: Wow, very long chapter. I was actually planning on writing more but then thought 'damn this is getting long'. Yes, I know that the Chief fighting through High Charity isn't accurate, but I haven't played that level for a while plus it would just get ridiculously long. So, hope you enjoyed it and tell me what you think, as always.

28. All That's Left

****Author's note:**** I never realized how hard it is to write a motivational speech type thing until I wrote this chapter. Every time I see that now I'm going to give the person lots of credit for it. But, enough with me going on and on, here's what you really want.

* * *

>All That's Left

Fred lead the way through Cairo's corridors with Boss right behind him and Will in the back keeping watch for more Covenant boarding parties. They were getting close now to the bridge, encountering few Covenant since the one large fight to save Brettan and his squad.

"You know, when you said they were overrunning Cairo," said Kelly, "I was expecting more than this."

"I don't know what's going on," said Brettan, glancing behind them, "Earlier you could barely enter a room without being ambushed by the Covies."

"They may just be regrouping to count casualties," said Fixer, then asked, "Wait, do they even do that?"

"Oh yes," said Will from the back, "They're a lot more intelligent than you think."

"Take cover!" Fred yelled suddenly from the front. Boss, looking over Fred's shoulder, saw two blue elites and a red one turning a corner up ahead. They all dove to either side, taking cover behind any boxes and debris they could. The elites continued forward as if they hadn't seen them.

"We should ambush them," said Fred.

"Can I trip one?" asked Scorch, "I've always wanted to do that."

"No, leave this to us," said Obi-wan, gesturing at Etain to get ready. As Boss watched the elites walk by, Obi-wan and Etain slowly rose into a half-crouch position and crept up on them. When they were close enough they activated their lightsabers, stabbing the two blue elites through their spines and into their hearts, killing them instantly. The red elite spun around in surprise only to be decapitated by Etain.

"Very nice," said Adams.

"That makes me nervous," said Brettan, staring down the corridor.

"What?" asked Linda.

He turned to look at her, "It looked like they were coming in the direction from the bridge, and I don't think there's many ways to get to it."

They remained silent for a moment then Boss spoke up, "That means they could have already taken the bridge."

Fred instantly turned to Kelly, "You're the fastest, get to the bridge quickly and find out."

Kelly nodded and took off, running so fast her feet made small imprints on the ground thanks to the weight of the MJOLNIR armor. They all quickly followed her though they would never in a million years be able to keep up with her. She whipped around the corner ahead and out of sight and they followed her a long moment later.

"How much longer till we reach the bridge?" asked Boss.

"Can't be long now," replied Brettan, "We were already close to it

when we were attacked back-" His sentence was cut short as they turned another corner and saw the entrance to the bridge. The doors were at the end of the room that they had entered, which was charred black and there were many plasma burns. Close to the door, knocked unconscious, was Kelly.

"Wait!" said Obi-wan, grabbing Fred's shoulder as he made to sprint forward, "I sense a trap."

"So do I," Etain seconded, "We have to be careful." Boss looked around the edges of the room, scanning for any hostiles but saw none.

"I don't see anyone," said Sev, thinking the same thing. Fred held up a closed fist, telling them to be quiet. He then reached down into his ammo pouch and pulled out a plasma grenade. He then pointed to Sev and Will and gestured to the left wall, and then to Linda and Fixer and gestured to the right wall. He then pointed to the others and gestured to Kelly and then to the door at the far end holding up three fingers so everyone could see. They nodded in understanding, the four he pointed to pulling out grenades. He dropped one finger, then the other, and when he dropped the third one he yelled,

"Go!" The five of them each primed their grenades, throwing to their designated sides the others sprinting past as they did so. Boss knelt down and grabbed Kelly, draping her across his shoulders and sprinted to the door. Glancing to the side he noticed what Fred had saw, six Spec-Ops elites, five in black armor and one in white. _That would've ended horribly if we ran in, _thought Boss. As they reached the door they saw it was locked and Boss reached for the panel next to the door.

"Sir! Open up, it's us!" Turning back he saw the others giving them covering fire. As he watched one of the black elites dared to jump from cover and ignite his energy sword, flying at Adams. Obi-wan activated his lightsaber to block the sword, causing the elite to stagger backwards. Obi-wan wasted no time as he jumped forward and plunged his lightsaber into the elites chest and whipping it out just as fast to deflect the incoming plasma fire. Boss heard a sound behind him and saw that the door had opened. Inside he saw the control room where there were a few Marines gesturing to them to quickly come in.

"Hurry!" yelled Boss as he ran inside and handed Kelly off to Will so he could go back. They mostly pulled away from the fight and were able to make it into the room but Fred, Scorch, and the Helljumpers were pinned at the far end of the room.

"We need covering fire!" yelled Fred over the blasts, but no sooner had he said that one of the elites activated a plasma grenade and lobbed it into their cover, causing them to leap out. Boss then saw in horror that they were out in the open.

"Covering fire!" yelled Boss as he brought his battle rifle up and fired along the right side. Sev and Adams came up to help, but one elite slipped through looking pissed off and holding a plasma sword, coming right at the others.

"Scorch!" yelled Boss to warn him but he already had it covered, rolling to the side and firing. But nothing was bringing this elite

down as he swung again, making Scorch duck to avoid it. Then fast as lightning he grabbed the elite's sword hand, keeping him from swinging, but forcing Scorch to kneel down since he was so strong. Fred saw the fight and ran up, driving the butt of his battle rifle into the back of the elites head, making him fall over while Scorch kicked him to the side. Fred pulled Scorch up and they made it to the door but the Helljumpers wouldn't move.

"Come on!" yelled Boss to them.

"Go ahead, sir! We'll hold them off!" said Brettan as his squad fired at the elites. Understanding what they were doing, Boss nodded and jumped back saying, "Close the door." A Marine went up to the panel and did so, locking it. Now that they were safe for the moment, everyone sat down for a breather. Lord Hood was in the next room, probably expecting them now. Boss went to talk to Fred but stopped as a burning pain ripped through his chest, the wound that Grievous gave him. He hadn't felt it during the fight because of the adrenaline coursing through his veins.

"Are you okay?" asked Obi-wan, noticing him grabbing his chest.

"Yes, fine, sir," he replied, "Just that wound acting up."

"It's Obi-wan," he said solemnly, "The Republic is no more." Boss raised his head to look at him and was about to say something else when Fred came over.

"We need to report to Lord Hood," said Fred, "You sure you're okay?"

"I'll be fine," he repeated, and followed Fred and Obi-wan into the next room, Obi-wan's words leaving a hollow feeling in his stomach.

* * *

>Fi woke up to the sounds of distant plasma fire and grenades exploding. He stood up, the pain from his beating ignored as he noticed the lights were turned off with only a small bluish glare from the energy shields. Suddenly and without warning the lights came on, showing the brutes and jackals that were guarding their cells. Looking across the room he saw Atin in his cell, standing and on alert.<p><p>

He wondered what was troubling the brutes so much and then noticed that the blasts were slowly getting closer, and then suddenly stopped.

"Prepare yourselves, he is coming!" Fi was confused, who was the he? Was it someone on their side? Or maybe Grievous got fed up with the Covenant and turned on them. Whatever it was it had the brutes unnerved. On the upper floor he saw a few jackals patrolling the entryways, their shields activated and carried casually at their sides as if nothing was going on. But how wrong they were as a plasma sword was activated and drove through one of the jackals chest, killing it instantly.

"He's here!" yelled a brute, causing everyone in the room to fire at

where the jackal had been killed. Fi saw a shimmer of light and then it disappeared. He then remembered that the Arbiter had used the exact same type of camouflage. Was it him? Suddenly a grenade was thrown into the middle of the brutes, causing them all to dive for cover. A sniper beam was shot at the base of the hunters' cell, destroying the generator and causing the energy shield to disappear, unleashing the two hunters onto the brutes who were recovering from the explosion. A couple more shots and two of the elites were free, looking like high ranking elites because they were wearing headdresses and white armor. They each pulled out an energy sword, their fury put into every swing of the blade.

"Keep fighting! Call for reinforcements!" yelled the brute, though most of them were beginning to panic at the sudden arrival of the hunters and the other elites. Then the Arbiter finally made his appearance, brandishing his own plasma sword and jumping from the upper floor into the fight. The brutes didn't stand a chance as they were cut down mercilessly. When they were all dead Fi thought the battle was over until the doors at the end of the cells opened and more brutes came in, one carrying a brute shot. The elites backed up as the hunters each let a plasma shot fry half the brutes that came in, the other two went berserk on the elites. During the fight a stray shot hit Jenos cell, opening it and letting him join into the fight, but the brute was already all over him. He had no way to defend himself and he was hit to the floor right next to Fi's cell, the brute beating down on him. But the Arbiter leaped forward and sliced through the brutes back, making it fall over on top of Jenos. When the last brute was killed, the Arbiter ran over to help him.

"Is he alright?" asked Fi, and the Arbiter turned to glare at him.

"Why do you care?" asked the Arbiter.

"No, don't," said Jenos, sitting up with the Arbiter's help, "He is a good human." The Arbiter looked back at Fi, but the anger was gone, replaced with, was that gratitude?

"Yes, now I remember you," he spoke, his voice low, "Your brother tried to save me." With this he lifted his sniper and shot the generator in front of his cell, destroying the energy shield.

"Thanks," said Fi, limping out, his beating from the brutes still causing him pain, "But do you know what happened to Darman? He fell in the hole after you."

"Is Darman the human?" asked the Arbiter, and when Fi nodded yes he replied, "He is fine, him and the Demon were transported elsewhere."

"Demon?" asked Atin from the other end of the room. One of the elites ran over and broke the generator in front of his shield and Atin walked over to them, "Who's the Demon?"

"Ah, so he hasn't told you his nickname we gave him," he said, "You know him as the Master Chief."

"The Chief's alive!"

* * *

>The Chief sprinted towards the walkway that connected their platform to the one the Pelican had crashed on, which Flood were now running out of. One Flood combat form noticed them coming and turned towards them, charging straight at the Chief. At the last second it leaped through the air, but the Chief was ready. He sidestepped and hit the Flood in the side of the head, sending it careening over the edge of the walkway.<p><p>

"Not these things again," said Darman, coming up to the Chief's shoulder.

"Were they in the Library?" he asked.

"Yes, everywhere."

"Figured as much," said the Chief, watching as the door opened to let in a small squad of three grunts and two brutes, "But I don't see how they can fly ships." He ran forward and fired his carbine at the nearest flood, dropping it in three shots.

"Just like any enemy, aim for the head!" the Chief called over his shoulder.

"Don't need to," said Ordo, pulling out his sword he had picked up. He jumped in front of a Flood form and cut right through its chest, slicing it open and destroying the infection form inside. The Chief primed a plasma grenade and threw it right in front of the door where it landed right on a grunts head. It screamed in panic and ran into the brutes leg before the grenade exploded, killing off all of the squad except for one brute, who started beserking against the Flood. Darman and Ordo each then armed grenades and threw them into the battle, and a few seconds later went off, leaving only one Flood form left. The Chief quickly dropped it with a few shots to the head.

"I'm going to check the Pelican for supplies," said the Chief, "Watch my back."

"We've got your six," said Darman, "And we'll grab some ammo any of these things dropped." The Chief nodded and made his way over to the Pelican. Inside he could see a weapons case busted open probably by the Flood. The door to the cockpit was completely gone and what he saw inside made him stare in astonishment.

Dr. Halsey and who had to be Niner and the other Jedi were in the cockpit, all unconscious.

"Darman!" he yelled outside, "Help me out!"

"What is it?" he asked, walking into the Pelican, but he then saw the three people in the cockpit, "Holy fierfek." He sprinted forward besides the Chief, who was helping Niner up. He took off his helmet and saw him stir, his eyes slowly blinking open. He started when he saw the Chief but then recognized him.

"Chief? What are you doing here?"

"Long story, Sarge," Darman answered for him, he was helping up Dr. Halsey.

"Darman!" asked Niner, turning around in surprise, "Why are you here? I thought you were in the Library getting the index."

"I was," he replied, "But it went wrong and I got separated from the others." Then the Chief heard a groaning and saw the Jedi getting up, rubbing his head.

"Oh man that hurt," he said, slowly opening his eyes. But they widened in surprise as he saw the Chief and Darman there.

"You're not one of the other Spartans," he said, looking at him closely, "So you must be the Chief, the one who's been missing."

"Yes, that's me," he replied, "And you are?"

"Bardan Jusik," he said, extending a hand, "I'm one of the Jedi who came here." The Chief reached up and took the hand, shaking it.

"How'd you find us?" asked Niner, putting his helmet back on and standing up.

"A flaming Pelican crashing towards the ground isn't hard to miss," said Darman, "But, actually, we were on the landing platform right next to this one."

"Talk about being at the right place at the right time," said Jusik, also standing up. As the two recovered from the crash the Chief started to worry about Halsey, was she okay? But his worries were vanquished as she too groaned and finally sat up. She looked around to take in her surroundings and her eyes rested on the Chief.

"John?"

"Wait, who?" asked Darman, and the Chief realized they didn't know his real name, which he regretted her saying in front of them.

"Yes, I'm still alive," he replied and felt the surprise in the room as he acknowledged his name, "But we need to move, there are Flood and Covenant here." She nodded and he helped her up. Then the five of them made their way back out of the Pelican to the complete surprise of Kal and Ordo.

"Niner? Jusik? How did you get here?" asked Kal, astonished, then it hit him, "You were on the ship that came out of Slipspace and crashed, weren't you?"

"Yeah, but we managed to get the Pelican out right after it did," said Niner, "As you can tell it wasn't the best landing."

"And not in the best battle attire," said Ordo, eyeing Jusik who was still shirtless with only brown pants.

"We didn't have the time to plan out our outfit for the day," said Jusik.

"Never mind that," said the Chief, "We just need to get out of here before the Covenant send more patrols searching for us. Hopefully if we get away fast enough they'll assume it was just the Flood in the Pelican."

"Even if we do, it's too late for that," said Darman, "They already know we're here."

"But he does have a point," said Ordo, "Let's get the hell out of here, out of this base completely."

"We should," said the Chief, "We have to get back to Earth and defend it from Truth's fleet."

"There's another fleet?" asked Halsey.

"Yes, but they haven't left yet," replied Kal, gesturing to the Forerunner ship off in the distance.

"That could be our way back to Earth," said the Chief, "We could catch a ride from one of the ships."

"Then we better get moving before it takes off," said Ordo.

* * *

>"Sir!" said Boss and Fred, both saluting before Lord Hood. Obi-wan nodded respectively.<p><p>

"At ease," he said without returning the salute, "I'm glad you all made it back. Any word on the team that went into the Library?"

"None, sir," replied Fred, "Did you manage to get our transmission?"

"Yes," he said with a sigh, "Yes, it came through about an hour ago."

"Do you know how we'll repel them?" asked Boss.

"Cairo is the last living Station, so it will need to be protected," he replied, "So are there other Spartans?"

"Yes, sir, three others besides myself," replied Fred, "But unfortunately the Chief is MIA."

Hood looked at him intently, "What happened to him?"

"We don't know," said Boss, "Last we heard from him he had killed Regret."

"You can explain later," said Hood, obviously thinking, "But we need you to take out a ship that has been dealing a lot of damage to Cairo, and where most of the boarding parties are coming from."

"Us?" asked Obi-wan, "But what can we do?"

"Board their ship like they have been ours, and initiate the self-destruct system. To do that you'll need a good slicer."

Fixer, Boss thought instantly.

"So we'll be splitting up?" asked Fred.

"Yes," replied Hood, "But after the ship is destroyed you will go to Earth and defend her from the fleet when it arrives."

"Yes, sir," Boss felt better now, they had a plan to work with.

"Then split up your squads and tell me when you're ready," Hood said, turning back to the controls. They walked back out to their squads, where they were grouped up. Fortunately Kelly was conscious again, and good to fight. They debriefed them on what was needed to do, and how they were going to do it.

"After we complete our objectives we return to Earth to hold off the fleet," finished Fred, "Any questions?"

"How are we going to split up the squads?" asked Adams.

"We're going to need a good slicer on the ship," said Obi-wan, "There will be codes to break to open doors and to activate the self-destruct."

"That's Fixer," said Scorch, slapping him on the back.

"Yes, I'll go," Fixer said, "I'm good with computers."

"I'll come too," said Kelly, "I may be able to help him with anything he doesn't know, no offense."

"None taken," he replied, "This isn't my universe."

"And they'll need plenty of cover," said Boss, "_sniping _cover."

"I'm sure you're not talking about Linda and I, are you?" said Sev.

"Cause we both know we suck at sniping," she added sarcastically.

"Ha ha very funny," said Fred, "They'll need you."

"I would go," said Adams, "but normal Marines like me don't go well with Zero Gee atmosphere."

"Scorch, you can stay here with me," said Boss.

"Same with you Will," said Fred, "But I'll be going with them."

"Etain, you can stay here to give support," said Obi-wan, "I'll go with them as well, but do you have a way to enable me to breath in the atmosphere?"

"We've got special masks that you can use," said Fred, "We'll get one for you."

"Then it's settled," said Boss, "Scorch, Will, Adams, Etain and I will stay here to defend Cairo from boarding parties. Fred, Obi-wan, Kelly, Sev, Fixer, and Linda are going to board their ship and give 'em hell."

"Sounds about right," said Will.

"When are we heading out?" asked Fixer.

"As soon as we can," said Fred, "I'm going to go talk to Lord Hood and ask him for the rest of the details. You guys can rest while you can and gear up on anything you need."

"I'll come with you," said Boss, making to stand up.

"No, I'll do it. Go ahead and rest," Boss was about to argue when he saw that Fred wanted to talk to him alone. What about he had no clue but he understood and nodded, sitting back down. "I'll be right back," and with that he left, walking back through the door they had come from.

"We have some ammo on the side here," said a Marine, gesturing to a wall where there was an array of boxes, guns, and ammo lying in stacks. Boss walked over to grab some ammo when he saw a Marine sitting on one of the boxes, his face pale and his eyes wide. His tag on his chest read 'Pvt. Scorenty'. He looked young, maybe 18 or 19 with short brown hair and eyes.

"Hey," said Boss, and Scorenty looked up, "You feelin' alright?"

"Yeah, fine, fine," he replied, looking back down.

"Doesn't look like it to me," said Boss.

"It's just," he started, then looked around and asked, "You won't tell anyone about this, will you? Especially a guy named Sergeant Avery Johnson. He would skin me alive if he found out I was saying this."

"Hey, Scorenty!" called Adams and walked over, "It's been forever!" Boss figured they had been in training together since he knew Adams and Johnson had known each other, and Scorenty seemed to know who he was also.

"Hey," he said, not looking up this time.

"What's wrong?" asked Adams, noticing his expression.

"It's nothing," he replied, "I'm fine."

"My ass you're alright," said Adams, grabbing his shoulder and shaking it, "Remember in training? You were the one always crackin' the jokes."

"Iâ€¦" his voice trailed off, then he continued in a quieter voice,

"I realized, we're all gonna die. The Covenant will blow up Cairo and their fleet will move in and glass Earth. I overheard them over there about the other fleet making its way here, it being larger than the one that attacked Reach. Reach fell, and that was a military base. Earth is just a civilian planet with barely any defense." He looked up, the fear apparent in his eyes, "We're all dead, a-and I don't wanna die."

Boss and Adams just stood there in silent shock, not expecting him to say that. But Boss quickly overcame it, he had to stay calm for the sake of Scorenty and even Adams, who may think the same thing. He took off his helmet, showing the horrible scar down his cheek from the force lightning. He knelt down besides Scorenty and rested a hand on his shoulder and stared right into his eyes.

"You're not the only one who feels that way, no one actually wants to die. Everyone fears the end, but what you need to do is to fight it, fight for life. You can't sit here and wait for it, you have to get ready to do what you planned on doing when you first enlisted, protect Earth and to make those Covenant bastards crawl back to where they came from. It's not over, not by a long shot. We're all prepared to put out lives on the line to keep Earth safe, and to protect her with all we've got. Are you ready to do the same?"

Scorenty sat there silently for a moment, his eyes not focused as if he were thinking. A moment later his eyes hardened and he sat up straight and said fiercely, "I'm ready. I'm ready to give these Covenant bastards what they deserve for starting this war."

* * *

>Author's note: Sorry, meant to have this out earlier but I got sick and that threw me off. Just to let you know my swim season starts in two weeks and in three weeks school starts up again, which will sadly mean less updates. And I failed my goal to finish over the summer, sorry I let you guys down. But I do hope you're enjoying the story, as always.

29. Getting out Alive

****Author's note:**** I coulda hit myself after I posted the last chapter cause I had forgotten all about Commander Gett. I'll be sure to put him in this chapter. And I am so SO sorry for such a long update, both school and swim season have started, which means they're taking up most of my time. But here it is, finally. Also, when i went to edit the ruler line wouldn't work, kept saying error on page, so there won't be any, sorry.

****Getting Out Alive****

After finishing his talk with Scorenty, Boss walked over to the crates with weapons and grabbed some battle rifle ammo. Along with that he grabbed a shotgun, knowing there would be small areas to fight in aboard Cairo.

"See, I told you the shotgun would be useful," said Adams, seeing him grab it.

"When did you say that?" asked Boss.

"Wait, maybe I said that to Johnson," he said, thinking to himself, "But it's a good weapon!" Grinning, he walked back to the group and Boss chuckled to himself. He followed him back over and saw Linda fitting Obi-wan with a black mask which he figured was the one that allowed him to breathe in the zero gee atmosphere. It fit over his nose and mouth, the strap going behind his head with a small tank attached to his back which almost looked like a jetpack, yet filled with oxygen.

"Fit well?" asked Linda.

"It's good, thank you," he said, pulling off the mask.

"Should last you the limited time that you'll be transferring between ships," she said.

"Let us hope," he replied. Boss sat down on a box in between Etain and Will and took off his helmet to get some air. He thought about the mission ahead, one group going aboard the Covenant ship and his staying here to defend Cairo. According to the Marines in the room, the boarding parties had been relentless. But from the looks of it there weren't that many. Were they regrouping like Fixer said?

"Hello," said Gett, waving his hand in front of Boss's face, causing him to snap out of his thoughts, "What's on your mind?"

"Just the mission ahead," he replied, looking up at Gett's visor which had a yellow stripe down it's front, "Nothing too big."

"What I've been starting to think about," said Etain, "Is the others, they haven't checked in after that last transmission. And we can't get a hold of them, something must be wrong."

"Could just be in a place with no transmission," said Kelly, shrugging her shoulders.

"Whatever it is, we mustn't worry too much," said Obi-wan, walking over to stand beside Gett, "I'm sure they'll be fine, but we must concentrate on what's in front of us."

"Speaking of which," said Linda, "Do you want a gun, Obi-wan? I could get one for you."

He shook his head, "Guns are not my type of weapon, I put my trust in my lightsaber."

The others continued on with talking about weapons, comparing ones from this universe with ones from their own. He just sat back and listened, not wanting to join in. What Kelly had said about them not having transmission he didn't believe, it had nearly been a day since they left, 10 hours since the last transmission. He knew they were in some sort of trouble, but whether they would get out of it or not wasn't up to them, they were too far away to help.

As the conversation continued he saw Fred leave the control room and gestured to him. Boss got up and walked over to where he was waiting.

"Is everyone ready?" asked Fred.

"We're all geared up and ready to go," he replied.

"Good," he said, "Here's how we're going to do this. My group will take the Attero as close as we can to the Covenant cruiser, from there we'll take a Pelican covered by two Longswords to the cruiser. The Longswords will blast open a hole on the side where the Pelican will drop us off."

"What are Longswords?" asked Boss.

"Just fighter ships," said Fred, "Have any of those?"

"Yes," he said, thinking of the ARC-170, "Will it be powerful to breach the hull of the cruiser though?"

"They are both armed with AGSM-10 missiles; the shield by the shuttle bay is weak there. That's where we'll strike. What do you think?"

Boss felt surprised that he even ask his opinion, he barely knew anything about this universe. Yet it felt good to know that he trusted him, "Sounds like a plan."

"Great," he said, "I'll go tell the others." Boss nodded and Fred walked over to relay the plan to them. The way Fred trusted him made him think how much the others from this universe trusted him and how much he trusted them in return. But what would happen when they had to return back to their own universe? He knew they couldn't stay here the entire time since they had own issues, but they would win the war here first before they went back.

"Hey Boss, what are you doing?" asked Scorch. He noticed Fred had finished briefing them and saw that they were ready to go.

"Nothing, just thinking," said Boss, walking back over to the group.

"You've been doing that a lot lately," said Sev, "Everything alright?"

"Fine," he replied, and then tried to distract them from the subject, "Is everyone ready?"

"Ready to kick some ass," said Adams, "If that's what you mean."

"We're ready Boss," replied Etain with an amused look at Adams.

"What about my squad?" asked Fred.

"We're ready as well," said Fixer.

"Then let's go."

"Deltas," said Boss, "Form up." The three of them made their way over to them. "You two," he pointed to Sev and Fixer, "Listen to Fred as you would listen to me, and do not make any stupid risks, especially

you Sev. This is far from over."

"You got it, sir," replied Sev, holding his sniper rifle across his shoulder.

"Good," said Boss hitting Sev and Fixer on the shoulder in turn, "Now get on that ship and show them who they're dealing with." They nodded, and Boss could tell by their stance they were raring to get into action. They turned and went to join the group that was crowding around Fred. A few moments later they went down a separate corridor that must lead to where the Attero was docked.

"They'll be alright," said Scorch, standing at Boss's side, "Sev will make sure of that." Boss smiled behind his helmet and walked over to where the rest of the group was stocking ammo. He saw Will showing Etain and Gett how to use a battle rifle with Adams looking on.

"There's your ammo counter," said Will, pointing to the top of the rifle, "And it shoots three bullets at a time so watch your aim."

"I think I've got this," said Gett, taking the battle rifle from Will and examining it.

"And you can use this as a secondary weapon," he said, handing Gett an SMG. He was about to give Etain one but she stopped him, "If it resorts to that I'll use my lightsaber."

"Everyone get ready," said Boss, sitting down next to Adams, "we leave in ten minutes." They nodded in response and Will went on describing the SMG to Gett. Boss looked over at Adams and saw him focused on Scorenty, who was over at the ammo crates organizing a few battle rifles.

"Don't worry about him," said Boss, causing him to turn around, "He'll be fine."

"It's hard not too," said Adams, looking down, "He used to be the jokester, the guy who would break the ice before a training exercise and keep our spirits high. But the war has made him more serious then ever."

"The fighting can do that," said Boss, "I've seen it happen before with Clone Troopers."

"Clone Troopers?"

"Troops who were cloned and trained to fight since birth, I'm one myself except I had different training since I'm a commando. Yet no matter how much they're trained some are not always ready."

"When you came here," said Adams, "Were you fighting a war? The Chief mentioned it."

"Yes, we were," he replied, "But I don't think it's still going since Obi-wan, Etain, and Jusik are here. They were all Generals."

Adams nodded and stayed silent for a moment, then asked quietly, "Did you know what you were fighting for?"

Boss remained silent; he hadn't been expecting this question. Before he had thought he had been protecting the Republic and upholding it's rights. But now that he had figured it was the corrupt Government it was, he didn't know.

"I thought I knew," Boss replied finally, "But now, I don't know anymore."

"You had been fighting for the Republic and the Jedi, who wanted peace in the galaxy and still do," Etain, who must have heard the conversation, stood by him, "Only the Republic is gone, so it's up to the Rebellion to overthrow the new Empire."

"Rebellion?" asked Boss.

"I'll explain at a later time, but not here," she said, "we should go now." Boss nodded and stood up, Adams following him.

"It's time we headed out."

"Yes he still lives" replied the Arbiter, "Why you care about the Demon I do not know."

"The same reason why you care about Jen0," said Atin.

The Arbiter thought about it for a bit then said, "Good answer human." Fi shook his head, the way the Arbiter kept switching from hostile to friendly confused him. Maybe he was just trying to grasp the concept that they had to work with him and Atin to get this done.

"Not to interfere, sir," said one of the elites in the headdress, "But we should keep moving before they call for reinforcements."

"You are right, let's go," said the Arbiter, helping Jen0 up. He then pointed to the two hunters and then to the door where the two took point position. Next came the elites, the Arbiter, and Fi and Atin taking the rear. As they moved Fi's injuries started acting up on him and he began limping. Atin noticed it too.

"You sure you're okay?"

"I'm fine," he replied. Atin was worried about him getting hit by Tartarus's hammer and then being beaten to near unconsciousness by the brutes, but commandos were meant to take a beating and he pushed on, ignoring the pain from his bruises and the few broken ribs. The hallways they were walking through were large, large enough to fit two hunters walking side by side as they headed through the next door and outside onto a landing platform. On the platform there were a few brutes keeping guard while standing next to the platform, many stories high, was a huge tank.

"The tank there," said Jen0, standing beside Fi, "is a scarab." He then remembered Delta Squad telling them about it and how it had shot down both Boss's and the Chief's Pelicans while flying down to Earth. Suddenly the elites and hunters fell on the brutes viciously, showing no mercy as one elite slashed his plasma sword through a brute's stomach while both hunters fired their fuel rod cannons at a single brute.

"Go, go, go!" yelled a familiar voice and Fi turned to look and saw none other than Sergeant Johnson climbing up onto the Scarab. He looked around for anyone else and saw two Marines he didn't recognize trying to hold their own against the last brute, which had already begun to go berserk. Swinging its fist it hit the first Marine in the side of the head, sending it flying like a rag doll. He was about to hit the other Marine when Fi sprinted forward, ignoring his injuries, and leapt on the brute's back. Quickly before he could be thrown off he ejected his vibroblade and stabbed in the back of the neck and through his spine, killing him instantly. He rolled off the Brutes corpse as it hit the ground and jumped to his feet. Looking around he saw that all the brutes had been killed and the Arbiter was approaching the Scarab.

"Listen," Johnson started, "you don't like me, and I sure as hell don't like you. But if we don't do something, Mr. Mohawk's gonna activate this ring and we're all gonna die."

"Tartarus has locked himself inside the control room," the Arbiter pointed out.

"Well I just happen to have a key," he replied, activating the Scarab so it's gun opened up wide, "Come on, grab me a banshee and give me cover. He's gonna know we're coming." The Arbiter nodded and walked away and conversed quietly with Jenos and Atin. Fi had no clue what they were talking about and was about to make his way over there when Atin approached him.

"Fi, you should go with Johnson."

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"With the Arbiter," he replied simply, gesturing over his shoulder at the two banshees that were now making their way in. Fi was about to ask him how he was gonna fly it when he didn't know how, but saw that the Arbiter was waiting for him. He was most likely going to teach him.

"Fi, hop on," said Johnson, "I'm not waitin' all day." He was about to argue but squelched it, what was the point? He walked forward and jumped onto the leg, hoisting himself up onto the main floor of the Scarab. He look around and saw an opening inside the overhang with a downward slope. He walked down in and turned to see Johnson at the controls, peering out of a camera which showed the outside. There were many other buttons and displays which he didn't understand and all gave off a small purple glow.

"Welcome to the party," he said, glancing up at Fi.

"How do you know how to work this thing?" he asked, looking around.

"Marine training, first learned how when we figured out they had these things, as with most Covie vehicles. It helps a lot."

"And what's the plan exactly?" he asked.

"To sum it up, we take the Scarab and unlock the door very violently for them to enter. We come in afterwards, save the girl and prevent

Mr. Mohawk from activating the ring." Fi looked out through the camera and saw a few Wraiths on the ground coming forward toward them with Atin and the Arbiter's banshees meeting them head on.

"Sounds simple enough."

The sound in the room was deafening as the Chief and the others made their way across the cat walk that was stretched across the water. Above them the Flood had grouped up on the above catwalk, firing down on them and some even trying to leap on top of them. The Chief lead the way with Ordo in rear and Darman, Niner, and Jusik making a circle around Dr. Halsey, Kal, and the two Marines who were the most vulnerable to the small infection forms. Everyone was on the outside were firing every which way, Jusik blocking incoming plasma shots.

The Chief fired his battle rifle which he had found on the Pelican until it clicked, showing the clip was dry. He quickly ejected it and replaced it with a fresh clip but he saw that after this one he only had one left. He did have his shotgun which he had found alongside the battle rifle but it wasn't as effective at long range.

"We have to get through this place," yelled Niner, "and fast! Our ammo won't last much longer."

"It might settle down once we get out of this room," said the Chief, quickly throwing a grenade and killing three combat forms coming at them. He then surged forward knocking two more combat forms into the water. "Stay with me!" he yelled and ran forward, being careful not to run too fast for them. He reached the door at the other end, which opened as he got close, and ran through it. It lead to a separate hallway where there were no Covenant or Flood. He made sure the others got through and the door shut before relaxing.

"That was close," said Darman.

"It's not over yet, listen," said the Chief and they all went quiet. It was silent for a few moments then one ear splitting screech that sent chills down the Chief's spine shattered the silence. "They're massing and coming up from behind."

"The lets get moving before they do," said Kal.

"No," said the Chief, checking the door, "They move faster than us. They'll be all over us in a few minutes." He paused for a moment, then said, "I'll stay behind and hold them off."

"No!" said Darman immediately, almost as if he knew what the Chief was going to say, "There's no way after all this we're leaving you behind."

"I'll catch up with you," he replied simply.

"We'll stay with you too," said Corrin, glancing at the other Marine who was standing at his shoulder. He was about to refuse when he thought the others could move quicker through the base if they had less people. And also, he would need the support.

"Okay and no Darman," said the Chief, cutting off Darman before he could volunteer to stay behind as well, "You'll need to stay with the

others and get to the forerunner ship. When you get there, tell me and we'll make our way to you."

Darman hesitated a moment then Niner spoke up, "Don't worry Dar, from what I've seen the Chief can take care of himself."

The Chief nodded his thanks to him right before Dr. Halsey said, "Good luck, John." Though he hated the use of his name, he did nod thanks to her as well and then said, "Go now, it won't be much longer. Cortana will give you directions to the ship."

"C'mon boys," said Kal, taking command of the group, but then said respectfully to Halsey, "And girl." The Chief knew they would make it now, with Cortana to help them and a formidable fighting group to help out Dr. Halsey. He then turned to Corrin and the other Marine, who were standing there with grim but determined looks on their face.

"Marine, what's your name?" asked the Chief.

"Private Sean Fezier, sir," he said. Only a Private, that wasn't good. But then again, Adams was only a Private and he had proved himself time and again.

"Corrin and Fezier, position yourselves on the left side of the door. When the Flood come through, toss a few grenades to slow them down and then open up and take as many of the bastards out as you can."

"Yes, sir," they replied and jogged over to the platform that was beside the door, bringing them a good two feet above the ground. An elevated advantage.

As the Chief made his way to the right side he heard Cortana come in over his helmet COM, "You do know what you're doing, right?"

"Yes."

"And you do know the odds of you being killed is very high."

"Yes, I am well aware of that, but I needed to buy the others time."

"Also, you do know that the Marines, lacking the MJOLNIR armor you have, have been condemned to death?"

The Chief was quiet for a few moments, than replied, "Yes, I do. They chose this fate and I wouldn't deny them of it when they want to die fighting."

It was Cortana's turn to remain silent, then she said, "Chief, be careful. I'll see you at the forerunner ship." She then shut the COM link off, severing their connection which got the Chief thinking.

Had I really condemned these Marines by taking them? And will I even make it through this?

But there wasn't time to think much longer about it as the screeches

on the other side became more frequent and suddenly and without warning, they burst through the door.

The Chief then stared in horror as he saw the first four Flood forms carrying rocket launchers.

****Author's note:**** I'm sorry it was short as well since I had it done and just thought I might as well post it. What I need from you guys (and girls) now is a vote. I need to choose a point of view for the group that's going on the Covenant Cruiser. The choices are either Fred or Obi-wan, but if you REALLY want someone else tell me and I'll see if I can do it. I need your opinions! And as always please review!

30. Overrun

****Author's note:**** I know, I'm sorry! ANOTHER long update. But I have no time to work on this during the week and the days I do reserve for it on the weekends were taken away from me. But with swimming ending in about three weeks I will have more time to work on it, which means smaller time between updates. Without further adieu here's the next chapter.

* * *

>Overrun

The Chief's surprise didn't last long as he instantly reacted, whipping out a grenade and throwing it at their feet. Corrin and Fezier did the same, Corrin arming a plasma grenade and Fezier a frag and both threw it. All three grenades blew up simultaneously, killing the four Flood with the rocket launchers instantly. The Chief looked to where the rockets landed and saw the nearest one was down on the ground.

"Cover me!" he yelled and leaped down, sprinting as he hit the ground toward the rockets. He saw his shield drop a quarter as he took some fire but most of the Flood were being kept at bay by the two Marines.

He reached down and grabbed the rocket launcher and hoisted it on his shoulder, aiming towards the door. He saw that already many Flood had gotten through, all combat forms. He knelt down and fired one rocket than another, completely killing all the Flood that had once stood in the doorway.

"Nice shootin' Chief!" called Corrin, shooting any Flood that walked through the door. The Chief thought they had it under control until a screech echoed around the room and at least 100 Flood of all forms came running through. The Chief reloaded quickly and fired the last two rockets but it seemed to do nothing to slow them down as more and more poured through. One combat form sprinted straight for him but before it could hit him the Chief brought the rocket launcher back like a javelin and threw it at the Flood, impaling it through the chest.

He jumped back onto the platform but three more forms jumped up behind him, trying to get a hit on him. He quickly brought his shotgun to bear, shooting one in the chest but the other pushed

forward until it was right in front of him. He hit it in the head with the butt of his shotgun but it didn't do much as it brought up its hand with the elongated fingers like whips and hit him across the chest, knocking him against the wall. It bounded forward to finish him off but he brought his foot up and kicked it back.

Now he had the room to bring his shotgun up and fire freely. Bringing down Flood forms left and right he heard in the background an explosion and shortly after one of the Marines cried in pain. He had no time to help them as slowly and surely the Flood were backing him up into the corner. As he continued firing he could see nothing but Flood stacked up, almost standing on top of each other to get to him. He saw no way out of the mass, and he couldn't help but think that this was the end.

* * *

>As Fi looked out he saw both banshees fly in from each side, destroying two of the tanks in bright blue explosions. He couldn't tell who was flying which banshee which meant that Atin had already gotten the controls down. They joined up together and headed to destroy the last tank but Johnson beat them to it.<p><p>

"Time to test this baby out," he said, charging up the cannon. Within moments Johnson unleashed a huge blast from the Scarab, completely demolishing the tank.

"Ha! How do you like it?" he shouted over the COM link, making Fi laugh. The Scarab continued to plow through the small valley they headed into, stepping on a Spectre that had been unfortunate enough to drive into its path. Many other banshees, flown by brutes, were coming in and trying to take out the Arbiter and Atin but none were able to as the two of them retaliated, covering each other as if they had worked together many times before. Suddenly and without warning, a banshee shot off a plasma cannon, nailing the side of Atin's banshee. Fi started forward as if he would be able to do something to help him through the screen in the Scarab. But as he watched, the Arbiter quickly shot the hostile banshee and Atin kept on flying as if nothing happened.

"Atin, you alright?" asked Fi over the COM, concerned.

"Yeah, I'm fine," he replied, causing Fi to let out a small sigh of relief, "Just got a little burned on the side but nothing too bad."

"We are coming up on the control room," the Arbiter announced, cutting into their conversation. Fi looked and instantly saw it. The control room stood out a little away from the beach, it's supports coming out of the water. There was a door which was large enough that it could fit a banshee through, through it was tightly sealed and he remembered how the Arbiter had said Tartarus locked it.

"Stay clear of the door," said Johnson and as soon as Atin and the Arbiter swerved away to confront a few enemy banshees he said, "Hey, bastards! Knock-knock!" Johnson then once again charged the Scarabs cannon and Fi heard the familiar whine right before he shot off another blast from the Scarab, this time nailing the door and blowing it open.

"Get inside," said Johnson, "That brute must be close to activating the ring." The Arbiter snorted as if he didn't like being ordered around by a human but he didn't complain as he landed his banshee by the door, Atin following close by.

"Wait, what about us?" asked Fi.

"Don't worry, we're goin' in too," replied Johnson, moving the Scarab forward, "We just need to get closer, expect us to jump from here?"

"Oh, right." It took little time to move the Scarab close enough to the platform outside the door where they could reach it.

"Alright, let's go," Johnson said, shutting down the Scarab and walking outside. Fi followed him, wishing he had a weapon to fight with. Johnson was in the same condition, and if they met any brutes inside the only choice would be to fight them fist to fist. To Fi, that didn't sound too appealing. As they walked inside, Johnson looked around at the burnt doorway, grinning.

"I burnt this place up good, didn't I?" he said.

"I've seen better," Fi replied, smiling behind his helmet.

"You haven't seen a good burnin till you've seen a Scarab in action, son," Johnson replied, gesturing to the walls. The way he addressed him as 'son' immediately reminded him of Kal, and he once again began to wonder if they were okay. Hoping that they had escaped from their captors, he followed Johnson's path as he picked his way through the wreckage and into the next room. Already there were dead brutes lying on the ground with weapons strewn everywhere across the floor.

"This ought to do nicely," said Johnson, picking up a beam rifle. Fi himself picked up a shotgun he found on the ground, wondering why a brute was even using a human weapon. He also found a carbine to use for backup.

"I think we're ready," Johnson said, giving Fi a questioning look. When Fi nodded, he headed down the large hallway at the far end of the room. In the distance, he could hear someone talking and as they got closer he could make out the words.

"â€|things about Halo even the Hierarchs do not understand." Fi recognized the Arbiter's voice and then heard Tartarus reply.

"Take care, Arbiter, what you say is heresy."

"Is it?" he questioned, "Oracle! What is Halo's purpose?"

"Collectively," started a voice he did not recognize, "The seven-"

By now Fi could see what was going on and he saw Tartarus holding a small sphere shaped object with Miranda Keyes just beside him. As he watched he saw Tartarus grab the sphere and snarl at it, "Not another word!"

Johnson quickly stepped down and stood back away, right behind the

Arbiter and Atin, his Covenant sniper aimed at Tartarus, "Please, don't shake the light bulb." The brutes that were flanking Tartarus moved forward to attack and Fi brought up his shotgun, but before anyone could do anything Johnson spoke again, "If you want to keep your brain inside your head, I'd tell those boys to chill."

Tartarus, with a furious look on his face, turned to the brutes and growled a command and they backed down.

"Go ahead, do your thing," Johnson said to the Arbiter.

The Arbiter started again, addressing the droid like object, "The sacred rings, what are they?"

"Weapons of last resort, built by the Forerunners to eliminate potential Flood hosts, thereby rendering the parasite harmless."

"And those who made the rings?" he asked, "What happened to the Forerunners?"

"After exhausting every other strategic option, my creators activated the rings." it continued, stating the facts as if it did it everyday, "They, and all additional sentient life in three radii of the galactic center, died ...as planned."

From behind Fi saw the Arbiter's shoulders drop and his head lowered as if he had just realized the horror of the situation.

"Would you like to see the relevant data?" the sphere shaped object asked hesitantly.

"Tartarus," said the Arbiter in disbelief, "The Prophets have betrayed us."

Tartarus remained silent for a moment, looked at the sphere as if coming to a decision about something. Was he actually considering what the Arbiter said? But Fi's hopes vanished as Tartarus drew back the sphere and hurled it at Johnson, hitting him in the face and knocking him over. Then without hesitation he turned and forced Keyes to stick the index into the receptacle on the control panel. After she had done that she dived over to the side and out of the way.

"No, Arbiter!" he yelled, turning towards them, "The Great Journey has begun! And the Brutes, not the Elites, shall be the Prophets' escort!" And with that he held his hammer up in front of him and he began to glow. With dismay Fi realized that he had developed an energy shield, a feat he thought was impossible to do with a brute. But suddenly the circular platform that had been behind Tartarus began to move, separating into three different platforms. In the middle a gravity lift developed and with a shot of horror he thought Halo had been activated. But a few moments later nothing happened and he figured there was a countdown sequence.

As he knelt down to help out Johnson he heard footsteps behind him and he turned to see elites charging from the hallways. They rushed past him and attacked the frontline of brutes, who tried vainly to fight back but it was no use as the elites overpowered them. But

Tartarus did not stay to fight as he leaped backward, landing on the bottom platform. As the brutes fell under the elites onslaught, they charged forward and leaped after him. The Arbiter drew out his plasma sword while Atin took out a carbine he must have found earlier on. Together the two of them followed the elites, leaping across the gap and onto the platform.

"You alright?" asked Fi as Johnson got back up.

"Yeah, I'm fine," he said, "Damn brute."

"Good, then I'm going in," he said and started forward.

"Hold up!" said Johnson, grabbing Fi's shoulder, "You're still wounded, you'll get your ass kicked out there."

"It's not much," Fi lied, and watched as Tartarus took out three elites with one swing "And anyways, they'll need me."

Johnson paused for a moment, "Alright, but I'll get your guys' backs." Fi nodded and ran forward, taking a running leap and landed on the platform. Tartarus and the others were on the one above him so he went towards the gravity lift and as soon as he touched it the lift shot him upwards right past the fight. As he landed on the top platform he heard the Commander and the sphere shaped object he heard called the Monitor talking in the background, most likely about how to undo Halo's activation. He jumped off the edge and onto the lower platform where he saw Tartarus swing his hammer again, almost hitting the Arbiter. From the entrance Johnson fired a few shots which hit the brute, diminishing his shield. Atin took the opportunity to fire a couple shots off. Tartarus winced but it didn't seem to do anything to slow him down.

"Lucky hit," he growled and went right for Atin. Fi jumped forward and unloaded a shotgun round into Tartarus's side but the shield absorbed the entire shot. He whipped his hammer around in retaliation, forcing Fi to roll under it and to the side. Knowing they weren't getting anywhere with this, he started thinking. He soon came up with a plan.

"Atin, Arbiter," he said over their private COM, "Lead him towards Johnson." Fi saw them nod in acknowledgement and Atin fired a few shots to distract him. Tartarus went towards him but Fi was there, firing his shotgun to lead him in a different direction, but still towards Johnson.

"Johnson, get ready," said Fi.

"Oh I'm ready," he replied. Fi kept backing up, dodging Tartarus's hammer, until he felt his back hit something and he turned around to find a small wall. Tartarus wasted no time swinging his hammer at the cornered Commando, but Fi quickly scrambled over the wall to avoid most of the damage but the shock wave itself sent him flying right next to the edge. If he had not stopped, there would be no surviving the fall. He got to his feet, only to see Tartarus right in front of him, holding the hammer right above his head.

"No escaping now," he snarled and began to bring the hammer down. But Johnson had been prepared for this and shot him with the sniper once again, bringing his shields down. The Arbiter took advantage of his

weakened state and stabbed Tartarus through the center of his back with his energy sword. Fi saw the tip of the blade stick out through his chest and spots of dark blood dotted his armor. Tartarus's face froze in one of surprise and he fell forward, knocking Fi backward.

And they both fell.

* * *

>Ordo now lead the way as they jogged through the almost deserted hallways. They had only met a couple brutes and an elite on the way but no Flood. They hadn't made it this far yet.<p><p>

"Cortana, which way?" asked Ordo as they came to a fork.

"Head left," she said over the speaker, "There you'll come to an elevator that will take you to the Prophet's chamber. Head through the biggest door than through the unlocked door. I'll give you more directions once you reach that point."

"Okay," he said, then turned to the others, "Follow me, and stay close, we're going to be moving quickly." He picked up the pace, almost running at a sprint. They went through the door where there was a small platform with a pedestal in the middle. He walked up to it and saw what looked like a button.

"Is everyone on?" he asked.

Darman took a look around, "Yep, that's everyone." Ordo then reached forward and pressed the button. The platform started vibrating and moved upward at a crawling pace. It took a minute to get to the top where they all got back off again. It was dark and Ordo turned on his night vision, his world turning to shades of white and black. He looked around and noticed that they had reached the Prophet's chamber and he searched for the big door Cortana had mentioned. He saw it in a few moments, it was hard to miss standing many feet tall at the opposite end of the room. He started walking forward when three brutes jumped out of the crevices on each side, two of them armed with brute plasma rifles and the one in the middle carried a brute shot.

"Look out!" yelled Ordo, who immediately stepped in front of Dr. Halsey. Niner stepped forward to stand beside him, his battle rifle out and firing at the brute in the middle. Ordo joined him and together they brought the brute down. Though before he died he managed to get a shot off. The grenade landed in front of the two of them but it did nothing against their armor. The other two brutes froze for a second, surprised at the sudden retaliation, but Ordo wasted no time as he switched his aim to the brute on the left. He fired a few shots and they all hit, causing the brute to roar in pain and jump down into the crevice with the other one following closely.

Ordo looked around for the brutes, his battle rifle held against his shoulder. He couldn't see them but he knew they were still here. Sure enough, a few moments later, the brute emerged from the shadows to his left, tackling him and taking him to the ground. The other brute followed him but Jusik had activated his lightsaber and met the brute head on. The lightsaber hit its target, stabbing the brute in the

shoulder. But it did nothing to him as it brought its fist back and hit Jusik across the face.

Niner went forward to help him while Darman shouldered the brute off of Ordo, who had been fending him off. As soon as it fell over away from him Ordo immediately rolled to his feet, firing. Darman joined him and the brute fell under the barrage of the bullets tearing him apart. Ordo looked over to see if the others needed help but the brute lay decapitated on the ground thank to Jusik's lightsaber.

"Didn't think two brutes could give us so much trouble," said Ordo, staring at the two corpses.

"They can get nasty," said Darman, "Chief said in the Spartans' first encounter they killed one of them."

"Really?" asked Kal and when Darman nodded he let out a long whistle, "Then we'd better be more careful."

"Yes," said Ordo, "Let's keep moving so we don't get caught out in the open by anything." He lead the way once more, going through the big doors into the next room where there was a small pedestal in the middle. On the pedestal, perched perfectly, was an energy sword. Before moving forward to grab it he looked around cautiously, making sure it was safe, then he walked forward and took it off the pedestal. Examining it, he deactivated the sword and put it in his ammo pouch. He turned back to the others and saw Kal raise an eyebrow.

"Doesn't hurt to have a backup one," he said simply. He then remembered Cortana's directions and walked through the unlocked door. There was a lift in the room which he took him upwards and outside. Right away he saw brutes and elites fighting each other, one side trying to kill the other. But as he looked out away he saw the Forerunner ship from earlier though now it was a lot closer.

"Ordo," Cortana spoke up, "See that lift at the opposite end of the platform?"

He looked for it and saw it, sticking out over the edge, "Yes."

"You can take that into the ship's cargo hold. You'll stay hidden there and the ship will take you directly to Earth."

"Alright, sounds good," he replied and addressed the others, "We've got a way out of here."

"Where?" asked Niner.

"The Forerunner ship," he replied, nodding towards it with his head, "we're gonna hide out in the cargo hold."

"What about the Chief?" asked Darman instantly.

"I'll contact him," said Ordo, then thought to himself, if he's still alive. "You guys go ahead, I'll be fine. Just meet Cortana at the pedestal and stay clear of the brutes and elites."

"Ordo, don't even think of doing anything stupid that'll put you in

danger," said Kal, then gestured to the others to follow him. What he had meant Ordo didn't know but he turned on his COM in between him and the Chief.

"Master Chief, come in," he said, "We have made it to the forerunner ship. It's okay to come forward." he waited a moment for a reply and didn't get one. "Chief, do you copy?" He waited a full minute and was about to give up when he finally got a reply, yet it was mostly static with words thrown in.

"Ordoâ€|broke throughâ€|Flood everywhereâ€|out me." Then the COM went dead.

"Chief? Chief!" he yelled but there was no use. Even with all the static he had gotten the general meaning of the message. The Flood had broken through his defense and he couldn't get out. The last sentence sent chills down his spine.

"Go without me."

He never wanted to hear that from a fellow comrade. But it was the logical thing to do, with the Flood coming and the ship could leave at any minute. He pondered it, and thought since when did he do anything completely safe? And anyways, he knew Darman and Fi had created a bond with the Chief during their short time on Halo. Also Delta Squad had developed a strong bond with him, especially since the Chief had put his life on the line for Scorch against Grievous. Kal had predicted this would happen, explaining the last sentence Kal had said to him. But though he didn't know the man well, and he hated upsetting Kal, he came to a decision.

He was going back.

* * *

>The Chief fired his shotgun over and over, firing one shot, reloading, cocking the shotgun and firing again. It was a never ending process, and it seemed that the Flood were not backing down at all. He hadn't heard anything from the Marines since he heard the explosion and he knew they were dead, or worse, turned into Flood hosts.<p><p>

"Master Chief, come in. We have made it to the Forerunner ship. It's okay to come forward." It was Ordo, but he couldn't get out at all. There were too many Flood forms about that he could barely move, let alone fire his shotgun.

"Chief, do you copy?" Ordo asked, but the Chief couldn't reply, not yet. He kicked one Flood off of him that had been trying to get his helmet off and then saw a carrier form coming right for him. He shot it immediately, causing it to explode. Many combat forms were caught in the blast but the Chief was too far away to be hit. He then saw an opening and took it, replying to Ordo.

"Ordo, they broke though. Flood are everywhere and I can't get out. Go without me." He severed the connection between him and Ordo. He hoped that he had got the message, and that he listened to him. He went to grab a shotgun shell and saw that there were only five left. He had his battle rifle left, but it wouldn't do much and it didn't have much ammo either. He quickly used up the five shells, killing

five Flood forms with each shot. But in the limited amount of time that he dropped his spent shotgun and reached for his battle rifle, a Flood form leaped on top of him. The Chief flung him off but another one pounced on him right afterward, this time taking him off his feet. With it's whipped hand it tried once again to dislodge his helmet.

This time he was successful.

His helmet came off, the edge of it hitting him across the nose, causing it to bleed. It flew into the midst of the Flood and the combat form on top of him immediately swung again, creating three large slashes across his cheek. He gritted his teeth against the pain and kicked the Flood form off of him. He scrambled to his feet and saw that the Flood were starting to move on, but there were still many there as one swung its hand at the Chief. The Chief ducked under its hand and punched it across the face, making it fall over. As he backed up he looked around for a place to get away and saw a ledge a few feet above his head. He jumped up and grabbed the edge, pulling himself up. There was just enough room to kneel down without his head hitting the ceiling. Looking down he saw the Flood looking for him. He thought they wouldn't find him when one of them unexpectedly jumped up, taking a slash at him. The Chief brought his foot forward and kicked it down. He had a feeling that this would last a long time but maybe, just maybe, he had a chance of getting out of here.

* * *

>As Ordo walked back into the Prophet's chamber, he heard the elevator on the opposite end go down. Uh oh, he thought and ran into the shadows. He crept forward until he was by the elevator though out of sight of whatever was coming up. He waited for a couple minutes and a moment before it reached the top he guessed what was going to be there. Sure enough, six Flood combat forms leaped off before the elevator even reached the top and headed straight for the door he had just come through. He ran forward to the elevator when they were out of sight and hit the button in the middle and elevator started heading down.

When he was close to the bottom he got his battle rifle ready but when the elevator stopped nothing was there. But he knew better as he heard shrieks and growls from the other side of the door. He stepped forward and the door opened automatically, showing four combat forms and a carrier form. He instantly reacted, firing his rifle at the carrier form that caused an explosion that took two of the combat forms. He shot the other two in the chest, seeing that it was more effective than shooting them in the head. Three infection forms had come out of the carrier but he stepped on two of them and grabbed the last one, crushing it in his hand. He walked through the corridor to the next door which lead to the next room.

The room that the Chief had last been.

* * *

>The Chief continued to kick down the combat forms as they leaped up, knocking them back down again. They kept snarling in frustration every time they fell only to leap back up. It became almost routine. But as he kept kicking them down, he didn't notice the small infection form on the ceiling right behind him. He didn't notice it

until it dropped onto his back, sliced open the back of his neck and entered his nervous system.<p><p>

He didn't notice it until it was too late.

* * *

>Author's note: I even have to admit I'm evil with that cliffhanger, but I'll get started right away on the next chapter so the wait won't be as long. And I WILL be wrapping up Halo 2 in the next chapter and starting on Halo 3, which I am really excited about. As always, I hoped you liked it!

31. Finishing the Fight

****Author's note:**** I am getting so bad with long updates, I am really sorry. But now, Halo: Republic Commando is slowly coming to an end. I think I may get up to 35-36 chapters, but I am not exactly sure. And just to note, I post updates on the new chapter in my profile here as well as my journals on Red vs. Blue (Shotgunchief). But anyways, here's what you really want.

* * *

>Finishing the Fight

Ordo stepped forward to activate the doors to open and what he saw was not what he expected. Flood limbs lay strewn everywhere while green blood splattered the walls, giving it a sickly look. There were bullet holes and blast marks everywhere and looking over he saw seven Flood combat forms grouped around an area alongside the right wall. He was wondering what they were doing when he saw one suddenly leap up, swinging but only ended up meeting a green armored boot which kicked it back down. Ordo looked up and saw the Chief, his helmet gone and his face determined to keep the Flood down. He was about to help when he noticed a small infection form crawling across the ceiling. In horror he saw it drop down on the Chief's neck, slicing it open and enter his nervous system, making the Chief cry out in pain and go into violent spasms.

Ordo instantly shot the infection form latched onto the Chief's neck, not worrying about shooting him but if he had been able to kill the infection form before it transformed the Chief into a Flood form. He saw him slump over as the form popped but Ordo's shot had alerted the rest of the Flood to his presence.

They immediately turned around and leaped at Ordo, hoping for a fresh kill. But he denied them of that as he brought his battle rifle around quickly and dropped three Flood in a row. He saw his rifle wouldn't be any use if they got too close so he slung it over his shoulder and grabbed the handle that was on his belt, activating it. The handle turned out to be the energy sword he had picked up earlier. One Flood form got close and he brought the sword down in a horizontal slash, cutting the unfortunate Flood in two. The other three came all at once, causing him to duck one of their slashes and he thrust the sword upward through its chest. As it fell he pulled out the sword, rolled over to the right and killed the other two Flood with diagonal slashes, falling both of them. They all hit the ground, all dead, but Ordo didn't check as he quickly ran to the

Chief's hiding place and leaped up, kneeling beside the unconscious Chief.

"Chief, can you hear me?" he asked, but saw it was useless as he didn't respond. He checked the wound on the back of his neck and saw two small tentacle ends sticking out. Ordo reached forward and pulled them out, as he did so the Chief gave a shudder and gasped as they came completely out.

"You alright, Chief?" asked Ordo again and this time, the Chief raised his head to respond.

"Yes," he said, taking deep breaths, "I'm fine, thanks to you. But why did you come back?"

"We'll talk about it later," Ordo replied, not feeling like describing to the Chief how he had come to his decision, "We need to go; the ship will leave at any second." He got up and the both of them jumped down.

"Wait," said the Chief, "I need to find my helmet." Ordo looked for it and saw it sticking out from under a Flood corpse. He walked over and grabbed it, tossing it to the Chief. He caught it and put it over his head, sealing his armor. Before following Ordo though he went to grab his battle rifle he had earlier along with some ammo on the ground.

"Here," said Ordo, grabbing the other energy sword he had and tossed it to the Chief, "You'll most likely be needing this before this is all over." He nodded and placed it in his ammo pouch and without saying a word Ordo walked back through the door he came from with the Chief following him.

* * *

>Fred led his team down the steps that led to the docking bay that held the Attero. Obi-wan sensed many things in the bay, but mostly it was fear. He and the others from the separate universe must have entered the war at a critical point. As they walked towards the ship a Lieutenant came out to meet them.

"Sir!" said Fred, snapping a crisp salute, "Do you know about the mission?"

"Yes, I do," he replied, "My name is Lieutenant Jeff Retirk and I am here to brief you, but we must hurry if we want to avoid any damage getting to the cruiser. The Covenant groups are starting to disperse more immensely." They followed him onto the ship and the door closed behind them.

"The Pelican you will be using is this way. The Captain has two of his most skilled Longsword pilots escorting you to the Covenant cruiser."

"How much do you know about this cruiser?" asked Obi-wan. It would be better to be prepared than jump into something without knowing what it was.

"All we know is that the Covenant have been calling it _Blood in Wrath_, they always pick the weirdest names. It is also set up and

built like any other cruiser with the exception of their cargo hold. It has a door on the side along with the gravity lift on the bottom. The door will be weaker than other parts and you can enter through there."

"Good," said Fred, "I also have those layouts in my armors systems; we can use them on the way."

"The self-destruct will be located in the control room," said Retirk, "Once you have armed it, call to your Pelican pilot and he will pick you up, it will be escorted once again by the Longswords back to the _Attero_. Any questions?"

"What will happen if our Pelican is destroyed when we need picked up?" asked Fred.

"We have one standing by if that is to happen," he replied, "If that one is destroyed as well we will give you directions from there. Anything else?"

Fred looked around at the people behind him, but when they didn't say anything he said, "I think we're good, sir."

"Good," Retirk replied, then stepped to the side beside a door, "This elevator will lead you to the Pelican's docking bay. Good luck." And with that he walked back down the corridor they had just come from, disappearing from sight. Fred walked forward and pressed the button, opening the doors and showing the elevator. He got on with the rest of them following him and when they were all on he pressed another button that led upwards. Once they reached the top, the doors opened once again and they were able to see the Pelican, and from what Obi-wan could tell, this wasn't an ordinary Pelican.

It was far more bulky then the others he had seen, showing extra armor had been added. Also, there were many more turrets attached to both the front and the back, making it a deadly dropship. Fred led them to the back of the Pelican, and Obi-wan saw one of the pilots setting up an ammo box.

"Welcome aboard," he said cheerfully, "My name's Lieutenant Butch Cromer, but call me Shark. I'll be your pilot for today." He grinned, and then continued, "I've got some guns and ammo here. Rocket launchers, battle rifles, SMGs you name it, just take what you want."

"Thanks, Shark, seems like we'll need the rockets," said Fred, hoisting up the rocket launcher with one hand.

"My pleasure," he said, giving them a casual, two-fingered salute, "I'll tell you when we're taking off, but for now go ahead and sit back and relax. The _Attero_ is getting ready to leave." Shark then walked to the cockpit, leaving the rest of them to grab any last minute ammo they hadn't taken before and come up with a plan.

"We don't know what we're facing once we get inside," said Fred, "But we can expect it to be hot."

"I can be one of the first ones in," said Obi-wan, "I will be able to block their plasma fire, giving you all the chance to return fire without being under fire."

"Sev and I will come in last," said Linda, "If it is hot when we enter, you'll need some sniper cover." She looked at Sev, "If that's alright with you."

"As much as I love coming in and getting the first kill," he replied, "I'll pull back and give cover."

"Great," said Fred, "Everyone else will come in between and kill every Covenant bastard that gets in our way."

"The Attero is departing," Shark called back, sitting at the controls in the cockpit, "which means we have ten minutes before the Pelican lifts off."

"Copy that," said Fred, and then turned to face everyone else in the Pelican, "Everyone get ready, this is gonna be one hell of a ride."

* * *

>As Fi fell, he felt nothing below him and thought for sure he would die. But he only fell a few feet as he landed on something, and looking he saw that he had landed on one of the small platforms that were around where he had fell. For a moment he thought he was safe but then looked to the left and saw another platform coming right at him, which would push him off and make him fall for sure. He immediately reacted, jumping up and grabbing the edge that he has previously fallen from.<p><p>

But when he grabbed it, his hands slipped and he barely grabbed it by his fingertips and he started to slowly lose his grip. Just when he thought he would fall again a hand grabbed his and pulled him up, bringing him over the edge and lying safely back on the lower platform. Looking up, he expected to see Atin but instead to his surprise saw the Arbiter, who was looking down at him.

"Thanks," Fi finally managed. The Arbiter only nodded, and then turned around to see Miranda Keyes jump down and grab the Index out of the receptacle. But it wasn't over yet as there was a loud charging noise and outside, Delta Halo shot off a large ball of plasma into the sky, which exploded in a bright flash of light. Fi got to his feet and saw Atin run over to him.

"Are you okay?" asked Atin.

"Nothing worse than earlier," Fi replied, then hit him on the shoulder, "You worry too much."

"You don't worry enough," he retorted, though he hit him playfully back.

"Come on, lets see what they're saying," said Fi as he saw Johnson ride down on the Monitor and they started talking together.

"What's that?" asked Miranda, talking to the Monitor.

"A beacon," it replied simply.

"What's it doing?"

"Communicating at superluminal speeds with a frequency of-"

"Communicating with what?" cut in Miranda, not wanting to hear the entire story.

"The other installations."

"Show me," she said, and the Monitor showed a hologram of seven different Halo rings, one with a red marker pointing to it which Fi figured was the Halo that the Chief had already destroyed.

"Fail-safe protocol," The Monitor explained, "In the event of unexpected shut-down, the entire system will move to standby status. All platforms are now ready for remote activation."

"Remote activation, from here?" she asked.

"Don't be ridiculous," the Monitor said, as if she had suggested something really stupid.

Johnson then cut in, "Listen, Tinker Bell, don't make me-"

But Miranda rested a hand on his shoulder, preventing him from going any further. "Then where? Where would someone go to activate the other rings?"

The Monitor stared at them for a moment, than answered, "Why the Ark, of course."

Just then Fi felt someone walk past and he turned to see the Arbiter walking forward, stopping between Miranda and Johnson, "And where, Oracle, is that?"

"I am quite surprised you don't know," the Monitor said, looking back and forth between the three.

"Alright we're stupid," said Johnson, who was fed up with the Monitor's remarks, "Now tell us where the hell this 'Ark' is."

It paused for a moment, and then replied as if it was the easiest thing to figure out, "The Ark is inside Earth's surface."

* * *

>Green blood splattered on the Chief's visor as he decapitated the head of a Flood with his energy sword, and then stabbed it through the chest to kill the infection form. Ordo was fighting right beside him, dropping combat forms left and right with his battle rifle. They were close to getting back on the ship, they were in the room right outside the large gravity lift that took them outside, but Flood forms were everywhere. After the Chief hadn't been able to hold them back they had started multiplying and now there were too many to even count.<p><p>

The Chief cut another Flood form through the chest as they slowly made their way to the door. Ordo now had his energy sword out since the Flood were getting too close. Luckily no carrier forms were able

to get near enough to explode otherwise they would probably be having more trouble. Finally as the Chief decided he had had enough he surged forward, knocking three Flood forms to the side and made it to the door. He turned to see if Ordo had followed him and saw that he was right there, cutting down two more combat forms as they tried to take a swing at them.

The Chief got through the door and brought out his battle rifle to cover Ordo as he made his way through the door. The door, being motion censored, would not shut as the Flood were all right there. Ordo got into the lift with the Chief right behind him and they both flew upwards toward the outside. He looked down and saw the Flood forms coming up behind them, the top one even trying to hit the Chief as they were going up.

"When we get to the top," said the Chief, "Go towards the ship as fast as you can."

"How come?" asked Ordo.

"Because we've got Flood coming up directly behind us."

"Oh great," muttered Ordo, but just then they reached the top. Ordo, taking the Chief's advice, instantly sprinted forward. The Chief went to follow him but the combat form that had come up after him jumped on his back, trying to bring him down. The Chief grabbed its arm and threw it over his shoulder, which resulted in him ripping the arm off the Flood. But he didn't wait to see if it got back up as he ran as fast as he could towards the ship.

Now he was slightly farther behind Ordo than he was earlier. He kept running until he saw Ordo jump off the edge and into the gravity lift and shot him forward. The Chief was almost to the edge when he saw Cortana on the pedestal.

"Good to see you alive, Chief," she smiled, but then returned to her normal stance, "But hurry and get on the ship, it's leaving at any moment."

"Cortanaâ€|" he started.

"I am not coming, I must remain here," she said, "Go!" The Chief had no choice but to leave her and jump into the gravity lift. He instantly felt the pull as it projected him forward and toward the ship's cargo bay. As he came close to the end of the gravity lift the ship started to take off, causing the grav lift to shut down. He free fell for a moment, flipping in midair, and then landed on his back inside the ship just as the doors closed, sliding along the ground until he lost momentum and stopped. As he stood up he heard Cortana over their private COM link.

"Chief, when you get to Earth, good luck."

"After I'm through with Truthâ€|" he began.

"Don't make a girl a promise, if you know you can't keep it." Those words stung, it was almost as if Cortana didn't plan on returning. But he couldn't reply as the ship carried on upwards and into Slipspace.

* * *

>Boss and his team formed up outside the door that lead back out. They were prepared incase the Spec. Ops elites were still out there. As he listened he couldn't hear any gunfire, but he didn't assume anything was safe.<p><p>

"On my mark," he told the others. He was preparing to count down from three when he heard gunfire. But it wasn't from outside, it was from the control room.

"Fierfek, they're in the control room!" he yelled and he turned around, sprinting toward the other door. When they walked through he saw the elites from earlier in the room. Lord Hood was shooting a magnum at the lead elite, but it didn't do much as the bullets were deflected from its shields. The white elite walked forward and knocked the magnum from his hand.

"Stand down, human," the elite growled.

"Go to Hell," replied Hood, glaring at the elite. The elite snarled and brought down his energy sword on Hoodâ€|

â€|Only to be stopped by Boss, who grabbed the elite's wrist and kicked him back. He then moved protectively in front of Hood, holding his shotgun and pointing it at the elite's face.

"Don't move," Boss said, but the elite roared in fury and leaped at him. He wasn't expecting this as he jumped out of the way, firing his shotgun. The shields of the elite took the brunt of the blow but the it was still thrown to the side. As he fell he was able to get a hit, bringing the sword across the side of his neck. But Boss didn't waste a second as he cocked the shotgun and unloaded another round on the elite, making it fall over backwards, clearly dead.

The other elites stood silent for a moment, then roared and all ran towards Boss. He prepared himself, but suddenly Scorch and Etain appeared at his side while Will, Adams, and Commander Gett fired on the elites from behind. Two elites fell immediately but one elite got through and swung at Boss, but Etain parried it with her lightsaber and Scorch stepped forward to cover her. She quickly finished the elite off, knocking the sword to the side and stabbing the elite through the chest and spine all at once.

There was then one elite left and he was fighting Will, Gett, and Adams all at the same time. It was growling in frustration as it couldn't hit any of them. Boss was about to go and help them out when he saw the elite make a sudden and unexpected lunge at Adams, who was kneeling. When the elite lunged he attempted to move backwards but fell over. The elite managed to get a hit on him, cutting him across the cheek. Adams fell backward with a cry of pain and the elite went forward to finish him off but he seemed to forget that both Will and Gett were still there. When the elite jumped forward Will moved as fast as lightning, punching the elite in the side of the head, off balancing it. Its shields were then down completely, giving Gett the chance to shoot a battle rifle round into the elites head. It fell over to the ground, its jaws wide in a frozen roar of defiance. Everything suddenly fell silent except for the silent explosions coming from outside. The control room itself was a mess now, wires everywhere and the controls were sparking.

"Thank you," said Hood in stunned belief, "That was too close." Boss nodded, there was a cut on the side of his neck where the elite had managed a swing. Had it been in the front he could've died.

"Where did they come from, sir?" asked Boss. Hood gestured up and he saw an open vent that had been blasted open. He was about to say something but then a Lieutenant came in over the COM link.

"Sir, incoming ship, unknown classification."

Hood replied immediately, "If it isn't one of ours, take it out." But then a different voice came in, a voice that was all too familiar.

"This is Spartan one-one-seven, can any read me? Over."

It was the Master Chief.

"Isolate that signal," said Hood, "Master Chief? What are you doing on that ship?"

"Sir, finishing this fight."

"Explain."

"The Prophet of Truth is on this ship," he replied, "If I can get a chance to take a shot at him, I could kill him and finish this war."

Boss looked at Hood, who nodded and Boss spoke, "Chief?"

"Boss?"

"Yes, it's me, listen. On our way back from Delta Halo we found something on our radar." He paused for a second before continuing, "It was a Covenant fleet heading for Earth. It was larger than the fleet that attacked Reach."

The Chief remained silent for a moment, and then spoke again, "Are you sure?"

"Yes, positive."

"Then we'll have to act quickly," he said, his voice unnaturally calm, "Truth is bringing his own fleet here as well."

"Wait, Chief," said Hood, "I don't want you going after Truth yet. From here it looks like he's landing on Earth, which means he's up to something. I want you to figure out what, but if it's a threat I want you to eliminate Truth as soon as possible."

"Yes, sir."

"Boss, I want you to take your team down and rendezvous with the Chief."

"What about Cairo, sir?" asked Boss.

"Fred's team is already taking care of the Covenant cruiser," Hood replied, "That will buy us some time. Though, there's nothing you can do now." Boss knew what he was saying; there was no way to save Cairo Station. Once both Covenant fleets arrive, Cairo wouldn't stand a chance.

"Chief, one more thing," said Boss, "Have you heard anything of General Grievous?" Boss was becoming increasingly worried that Grievous had not been around at all. And with the group that had headed into the Library not being in contact, he feared the worst.

"No, nothing," he replied.

Just then another familiar voice came in over the COM link, "Don't worry Boss, we didn't run into Grievous in the Library."

"Darman?" asked Boss, "Who else is there with you?"

"Besides the Chief there's Niner, Kal, Ordo, Dr. Halsey and Jusik. Why, who's there with you?"

"Scorch, Will, Etain, Gett and Adams," replied Boss, "Everyone else went on a different mission. We'll explain once we meet up with you."

"The ship is landing," said the Chief, "We have to go. I'll see what Truth is doing, sir. Spartan one-one-seven, out." The COM link then shut off, and the control room went silent once again.

* * *

>Author's Note: Well, I managed to get everyone in this chapter, and filled in all the cliffhangers. I am now, well kinda already started, my way of Halo 3. And with Ghosts of Onyx (yes I read it, I got an early copy of it) and the Halo 3 screenshots, I have a somewhat good idea of what happens. Of course, there's always a large chance I got it wrong. As always though, hope you enjoyed it!

32. Bad Timing

****Author's Note:**** The waiting wasn't too long, was it? â€|Please don't hurt me, lol. But anyways, I can tell I won't even finish this by the end of the year like I had planned too, so Halo: RC will continue into the year of 2007. Now, here is Ch. 32.

* * *

>Bad Timing

Fi and Atin followed Miranda Keyes outside the complex, she had a sudden urge to get back to Earth.

"Do you know if the Covenant know about the Ark?" asked Miranda to the Arbiter.

He shook his head, "I don't, we no longer have contact with the Prophets. If they have, there is no way to figure this out."

"No, there is a way." They all looked over and saw a white-armored elite while three black elites stood behind him, their armor all shining in the sun. Fi noticed, looking closer, that half of the white armored elite's jaw was missing.

"How?" asked the Arbiter, walking over to meet him.

"We go to Earth, and figure it out for ourselves. I heard from one of the elites that was fighting in the battle with you, the Ark has the power to wipe out every single life in this entire galaxy. Every race that was once or still is a part of the Covenant, the humans, and every other being in this galaxy will be wiped out."

"But how can we stop this?" asked the Arbiter, "The Covenant are already at Earth, the humans maybe have fallen already."

The elite didn't reply for a moment, looking at Miranda and Johnson, and said, "We help the humans defend Earth." There was a cry of outrage from the black elites from behind him, who were strongly against this plan.

"Commander, there is no way that we can work side by side with the humans," one growled, "There is too much hate, and too much revenge wanted in between the two. It would end in chaos for each side."

"No," the Commander replied, "The Arbiter has proved that it is possible to do so. He worked side by side with these four humans and stopped Tartarus from activating Halo."

The Arbiter lowered his head in resignation, "If it wasn't for the humans, I would not have beaten Tartarus." The black elites remained silent, either thinking about what was happening or too infuriated to speak.

"But this does not mean," continued Half-Jaw, his voice going hard, "that we are friends. We are simply allies until we are able to prevent the Prophets from activating the holy Ark. After that, anything could happen."

"You won't have to worry about that," Johnson muttered, but he understood what had to be done. They all did, otherwise they would have been blood shed between the two sides much earlier. "But we must leave and get back to Earth, if the Prophets have found the Ark there is no hope for your home planet. Let alone, the rest of us."

* * *

>The Chief felt the ship decelerate as it entered the Earth's atmosphere, preparing to land most likely in Covenant held territory. For all he knew, Earth could be almost entirely held by the Covenant. His info he had was already outdated, and it he had only been gone for barely over a day. Moreover, with what Darman said, the new Spartans that had to be Fred, Will, and Linda, he knew that some sort of tide had to be turned with their force slowly growing stronger.<p><p>

"So," said Darman, breaking the silence, "what do we plan on doing once this ship lands?"

"We must get the doctor to a safe place," said the Chief, "No offense ma'am, you're not fighting fit."

"None taken, John," she said, "But if Boss's team meets up with us, I could take their Pelican out and not be a burden to you."

"But where will we meet up with them?" asked Niner, "We can't here; there will be too many Covenant around."

"There has to be a UNSC camp around here somewhere," replied the Chief, "but if there isn't, we'll just find a safe place." He was about to continue when a voice came over a loud speaker that was placed in the cargo hold.

"There is news that must be reported," said a voice that sounded like a brute, "Tartarus, our courageous Chieftain, has fallen. He died at the hands of the Arbiter and humans that worked side by side to prevent him from starting the Great Journey, and they murdered him to do so. The elites and the humans have allied against us! They have betrayed us by being with the enemy! Let blood be repaid with blood! There is a new rule, kill any elite, grunt, or hunter that you see. They are now against the Covenant, and now pose a threat. But the Covenant will thrive, and we will continue on our path towards the Great Journey!" The speaker then shut off, and the room was left in silence. No one spoke for a moment, then Jusik spoke up,

"That definitely changes things."

"So, now what?" asked Darman, "Do we kill the elites or any of them not a part of the Covenant? Are we officially allies?"

"No," said the Chief, "They just assumed that, either that or Lord Hood hasn't heard about-" But he was cut off once again as on the opposite end of the room a door opened and three shadows appeared on the floor.

"Get down and hide!" hissed the Chief, throwing himself behind a pile of crates. Darman hid next to him, with the others hiding in different spots.

"No matter what they do, their death is imminent," said a voice the Chief recognized as the one that had been over the speaker a moment ago.

"It always has been, the Commandos and Jedi coming from the separate universe doesn't change a thing." The Chief's eyes widened in surprise as he recognized the voice. The last time he had seen him had been when Fixer was captured by the MagnaGuards.

It was General Grievous.

"This is not good for us," whispered Darman. The Chief shook his head and continued to listen as a third voice spoke up, almost as robotic sounding as Grievous's.

"If you had taken care of them earlier we wouldn't have been having this problem." The Chief didn't recognize this one, it was someone new. But out of the corner of his eye he saw Jusik wave to him, signaling to come over by him. The Chief peered around the corner and

saw that all three of their backs were turned so he quickly sprinted over to kneel beside Jusik.

"What is it?" asked the Chief.

"I know that third person," he whispered, peering over the top of the box they were hiding behind.

"Who?" he asked instantly.

"There was a Jedi named Anakin Skywalker who turned to the Dark Side," he said, "That's him, I can sense it."

"I heard about him," said the Chief, "Jedi gone Sith?"

Jusik looked surprised, "Yes, how did you know?"

"Delta Squad and I talked to Mace Windu before we left. But never mind that, what is he capable of?"

"He can do everything Grievous can minus the four arms plus he can use the force, which he uses differently than any Jedi."

"How differently?"

"He can choke people and crush people's windpipes," he replied, "And that's only the start."

"Great," breathed the Chief, watching the three enemies talk. Suddenly, the ship slowed down immensely and a few moments later, there was a thud as the ship landed on Earth. Behind them, a hole in the floor opened up to reveal a gravity lift. This one was much larger than the one's on High Charity as it was used for Wraiths, Spectres, and Ghosts. Ordo appeared from his hiding spot from a Ghost that was parked next to Chief's hiding spot and slowly made his way over to the Chief and Jusik.

"If we're going, it has to be now," he said, "Otherwise those three are going to find us."

The Chief nodded, "You go down to make sure it's clear, and I'll bring up the rear and make sure everyone gets down." Ordo hesitated, but then realized that each job was equally dangerous and went over to the lift, hopped in and disappeared from sight. They waited a few moments, then they heard Ordo over the COM link.

"There were only a few jackals and a brute, but not anymore," he paused, most likely making sure everything that was down there were dead. "All clear."

"Copy that," said the Chief, then turned to Jusik, "alright, go ahead."

"I'm staying up here," he said, "If they attack, you won't have any way to defend against their lightsabers." The Chief agreed reluctantly and waved the others forward to go down. Darman went in first, followed by Kal. But when Niner was helping Dr. Halsey over to the lift she tripped on a gun that had been lying on the floor and bumped into an ammo rack, knocking it over. The Chief cursed to himself and looked to see if anyone had noticed, hoping no one

had.

Anakin had.

"They're here," the Chief heard him say and instantly Grievous activated two of his lightsabers.

"Dammit, go! Go!" Yelled the Chief, running forward. Niner helped Dr. Halsey into the lift and went in himself. The Chief and Jusik were about to go down when Grievous cut them off.

"You're not going anywhere," he said, and swung at them. But Jusik instantly reacted, pulling how his lightsaber and blocked it. Grievous must not have known he was a Jedi as he looked surprise, but then started bringing his lightsabers down even faster, causing Jusik to parry each blow with bright blue arcs of light. The Chief thought fast, thinking how he could help, then he remembered the energy sword he had. He grabbed the hilt and activated it, running forward by Jusik to help him hold off Grievous. His training in hand-to-hand combat was all coming back to him as he parried a blow from the General then swung back. But from what he could tell, they weren't even fazing him. Grievous blocked each swing with ease, returning the blow with lightning fast reflexes. They couldn't beat him, not at this rate, but that wasn't what the Chief wanted.

He and Jusik were slowly turning, making their way close enough to the gravity lift so they could get out of here. They were getting closer, in only a few moments they would be able to leaveâ€¦

Then, the strangest thing happened. The Chief froze in mid-swing, not moving. Both Grievous and Jusik stopped, confused for a moment, but then Jusik gave a gasp and turned toward Anakin. Anakin had his hand raised, held out towards the Chief. As he watched, he saw his hand rise up. As he did that, the Chief felt himself being lifted as well, a few feet off of the ground. He could move now, but he couldn't get down and he realized that Anakin was using the force on him. He then watched as Anakin slowly closed his hand into a fist, and the most unbearable pain the Chief had ever felt came.

It felt as if he were being crushed, as if his skeletal structure would break at any moment and he would cave in, even with the bio-enhancements he had. He gritted his teeth and closed his hands into tight fists, trying to take the pain and bear it, but it was impossible. He started yelling in pain.

"Chief!" cried Jusik, looking around for something to help him.

"I can handle it!" yelled Grievous, looking at Anakin, outraged.

"I can handle him," he replied, "You finish off the Jedi, if you're able too." Grievous snorted and turned to fight Jusik, but he was gone. Suddenly, from farther down the room, there was an explosion of crates and the Chief opened his eyes for a brief moment to see them all hit Anakin, unbalancing him. The Chief fell to the ground on his side and stood up, though still feeling a little shaky. He looked over and saw Jusik standing there with both his hands raised, and he realized that Jusik had used the force as well.

"Come, let's go, it's now or never," he said, and confident that Jusik would make it to the gravity lift with the distraction he

jumped inside. As he reached the bottom he heard Anakin yell, "No, don't go after them!"

He landed and got out of the way and let Jusik down, and the two of them ran over to the others.

"You both okay?" asked Kal.

The Chief spoke first, "Yes, but we have to get the hell out of here. Grievous is following us down."

"Good thing we landed on the edge of their camp," said Ordo, "We won't have to deal with many patrols."

"Then let's go," said the Chief, slinging Dr. Halsey over his shoulder as if she was a rag doll, "Sorry ma'am, but we're going to be moving fast." And with that, he took off with Dr. Halsey over his shoulder, the others following behind him. Looking back briefly he saw Grievous giving chase though he was already far behind.

Once they were out of the Covenant camp, they arrived in a city. Skyscrapers and buildings towered over them on the street where there were flipped cars and debris scattered everywhere. They ran in silence until Jusik spoke.

"We'll never outrun him," he said, "I'll stay behind." He then stopped and turned to face Grievous, his lightsaber raised.

"Jusik, no, we have to get out of here!" said Niner.

"I'll buy you some time!" He yelled, "Go!"

"Fierfek no," said Darman and walking up beside Jusik, he pulled out his battle rifle and started firing. The Chief set down Dr. Halsey, pulled out his own battle rifle, and joined in. Grievous then halted in his tracks, blocking the incoming bullets with his lightsabers, making small blue and green sparks as they hit his blades. The Chief actually thought they could hold him back, then slowly but surely, Grievous was making his way forward.

"Go, we'll hold him off," said the Chief. Ordo walked forward, placed his hand on Darman's shoulder, and pulled him back.

"Let me do it, you go help the others," he said. Darman figured there was no point in arguing as he withdrew and went with the others. They left and soon, they were gone over the next rise. The Chief and Ordo continued to fire, while Jusik waited for Grievous to get closer. Then, without a spoken word, Spartan, Jedi, and ARC Trooper all charged at Grievous, who was taken by surprise.

Jusik swung and he parried it, but the Chief and Ordo flanked the General from each side, still firing their battle rifles. Grievous lunged first at the Chief, then at Ordo, forcing each back but they kept firing. He then lunged at Jusik, feet first, to tackle him and pin him to the ground. But he rolled to the right to dodge it, bringing his lightsaber above his head to block Grievous's lightsabers. Just when the Chief thought they had it in control again, Grievous backed up and separated his arm, and with that he activated a third lightsaber.

"Aw, fierfek," he heard Ordo say before Grievous lunged forward. Jusik tried his best to block it, but the third lightsaber got past and hit him across his upper arm. He face contorted in pain but continued to fight back with one hand on his lightsaber. The Chief and Ordo started firing again, hoping to get Grievous's attention, but he was now focused completely on Jusik. The Chief knew they wouldn't be able to get his attention that way until he killed Jusik, so he rushed forward and shouldered Grievous in the side, off balancing him.

He roared in fury and turned on the Chief, and he was getting ready to bring him down when he heard a voice over the COM link.

"Wahoo! The cavalry has arrived!" It was Scorch, and looking up he saw a Pelican just coming up over the horizon.

Boss's team had made it.

* * *

>"Get ready!" yelled Shark from the cockpit, "ETA in five minutes!" The Pelican had taken off from the Attero, heading straight for the Covenant battle cruiser _Blood in Wrath_. The two Longswords flanked them on each side, prepared to take down any Seraph fighters that got in their way. They were the Covenant's answer to the Longsword. Fred held onto the ceiling rungs that hung from the ceiling, ready for any unexpected fire that might hit the Pelican. He was the only one standing, too restless to sit down; also the seats frame was too small for his bulky MJOLNIR armor. Everyone else was seated, ready to board the Covenant Cruiser when they were close enough. Obi-wan already had his face mask on, so he could breathe in the zero gee atmosphere.

Suddenly the ship jolted to the side, obviously under fire. Fred moved his foot back to steady himself, then walked forward into the cockpit to see what was going on.

"What's happening?" he asked.

"A few Seraphs came down on our right flank and fired a few shots, but it didn't do much damage. One of the Longswords chased them down." Fred nodded, though he wasn't relieved. He wouldn't be relieved until he was out of zero gee gravity and on solid ground. They flew for a few more minutes; no ships fired upon them, but then the cruiser came into sight.

"There she is," said Shark, "she is beautiful for her being Covenant."

"Better appreciate her beauty now," said Fred, "Because she'll be just another dead ship floating around here soon."

"One minute left," said the co-pilot, who was sitting in the seat next to Shark, "Get ready." Fred nodded and went back to join his team, who were all waiting for his instruction.

"We've got one minute," said Fred, "get ready to board." They all rose and grabbed the rungs as he had done, and Obi-wan moved to the front, ready to go first. Fred stood by him and he nodded to him, and Obi-wan nodded back.

"Thirty seconds!" yelled Shark over his shoulder, and Fred felt the Pelican start to turn. As they approached the Cruiser, the Pelican started to rock more violently.

"Razor-12, fire missiles," said Shark.

"Copy that, Bravo-431," replied the Longsword pilot and the two of them flew on forward. One of the Longswords then fired a Shiva nuclear-tipped warhead unto the hull of the ship, right where the cargo doors were. The shields flickered briefly, then faded around that area. From there, each Longsword fired two AGSM-10 missiles, which impacted on the cargo door, blasting it open.

"You've got two minutes," said the Longsword pilot from earlier. The two then flew off to give them cover as the Pelican lined up with the open hole in the hull of the Cruiser. Obi-wan went first, walking across the small gap and into the Cruiser. Fred followed right after, floating slightly in the zero-gee atmosphere, and brought his battle rifle to bear. In front of him, Obi-wan activated his lightsaber, the blue blade illuminating the darkness but couldn't see anything else inside.

"This isn't right," said Obi-wan. Fred went to stand beside him inside, as best as he could with there being no gravity, and saw what he meant. There were no Covenant around, none hiding and no shots being fired. An eerie silence fell over them as they entered without being able to hear explosions from inside their Pelican. As the rest of the group came in behind them, Fred heard Shark over the COM link.

"When you're ready, call us and we'll come pick you up."

"Copy that, Spartan-104 out," he replied, then shut off the COM link and addressed the rest of his squad, "COM silence from now on unless it's important." They nodded and quickly Fred led his team away from the cargo bay door and further into the cruiser, knowing even though the Covenant weren't here yet, they would be momentarily. When they reached the far end, there was a wall with three doors. He pulled up his layout of the Cruiser on his HUD and saw that they would need to take the far left one, which he noticed was motion censored. He gestured to it with his hand and pointed to each side of the door. Kelly understood and went to one side of the door, activating the censors. The doors opened to show a small squad of four jackals who were standing casually with their shields down, easy targets.

Fred shot one in the head with his battle rifle while Sev sniped two more, leaving one more standing. It was able to bring it's shield to protect it's body, but from too much fire the shield was knocked to the side and the jackal was brought down without mercy. Fred searched the bodies for plasma grenades and only found two, which he put into his ammo pack. He then continued on, the others following him as he walked down the corridor, battle rifle against his shoulder. The corridor was fairly short, ending at another motion censored door. It was unlocked once again, but this time Linda moved forward to open the doors while the others covered her. This time there were no enemies on the other side and they walked through, taking in their surroundings. Fred saw that they were now in the shuttle bay, there was a phantom hovering just to the side with a couple of banshees on the ground. Everything else that was supposed to be there were

fighting in the battle.

Down below, on the bottom floor, there were a few blue armored elites patrolling, completely oblivious to Fred and the rest of his squad. Fred ignored them for now, looking at the layout and saw that they needed to get to the top floor to get to the control room, they were now on the one below it. He was about to continue on when he felt someone tug on his shoulder, the only way to get a Spartan's attention. He turned and saw Obi-wan.

"What is it?" he asked in a hushed whisper through his helmets speaker.

"Those elites down there, they feel like they are hiding something," he whispered back, worried, "I think they may know we're here." Fred looked back down at the elites, but they still didn't do anything to show that they knew his squad was here. But he trusted Obi-wan's judgment, so he decided to keep a look out.

"I'll keep watch," Fred replied and Obi-wan nodded, knowing that was all he could do. Fred walked to the nearest door and stepped in front, opening the censored door. He looked inside and saw that the ramp sloped upward and that was the way to go. He signaled to the others to follow him and led them through the corridor, still keeping watch for another Covenant patrol. So far though, from the looks of it, this was going to be a joy ride, and that was unnerving him. All experiences in the past when he had boarded a ship they fought countless Covenant before they got to the control room. Now, all they had to do so far was kill off a Covenant patrol consisting of some jackals. Fred then came to the conclusion that the Covenant wanted to get them somewhere, trap them, and finish them off. Whatever they wanted to do, however, Fred and his squad could handle.

Or at least, he hoped so.

* * *

>Author's note: Yes, I know, slightly short. But I wanted to get out another chapter before this week started. Yeah, I kinda failed, but I hope you guys enjoyed! And if I don't get another chapter out before then, Happy Holidays!

33. Weren't they the Enemy?

****Author's note:**** Oh man, I am so sorry! The past month has been so jumbled up for me with Winter Break and Christmas, Semester finals, my cousin visiting from college and so much other stuff. I completely lost track of things and once again I am really sorry! Please forgive me, and to hopefully make things better I made this chapter longer. Enjoy!

* * *

>Weren't they the enemy?

As Grievous saw the Pelican come in over the rise, he immediately turned around and ran off into the distance, disappearing around the next corner. The Chief, Ordo, and Jusik waited on the ground as the Pelican slowed down and started to land near them, buffeting the

ground with the draft from its wings. When it had landed, the Chief saw Boss jump off, followed by Scorch, Adams, a Spartan the Chief instantly recognized as Will, a clone and a woman with brown hair down to her shoulders whom he didn't know. When they were all off of the Pelican, it took off and headed in the direction it had come from. Boss and his team walked over to join them.

"You seem to be getting yourself into the most life risking situations," said Boss, stopping in front of the Chief. The Chief then realized that he was relieved to see them, see all of them alive and unhurt, and that since he had met them, they had truly become companions. He rested his hand on Boss's shoulder and Boss did the same, resting his hand on the Chief's shoulder and gave it a shake.

"Wow, a lot has happened since we last saw ya," said Scorch, hitting the Chief lightly on the arm. The Chief dropped his arm from Boss's shoulder and turned towards Scorch.

"Seems like I've missed a lot," he said and turned towards the woman and the clone, who were talking to Ordo and Jusik.

"Etain Tur-Mukan," she said, "And this is my Clone Commander, Gett." The clone with the yellow markings on his helmet and arms nodded. The Chief nodded back and looked at Will, who was standing off to the side. He walked over to him and did the normal Spartan greeting, swiping his two fingers over his faceplate in a smile as Boss and Scorch looked on. Will did the same in response.

"You don't know how relieved I am to see you standing here," the Chief said quietly to Will so no one else could hear him.

"How do you think I felt when we found out you were missing?" asked Will, and the Chief could picture Will grinning underneath his faceplate.

"Just don't die on me again, alright?" said the Chief.

"Don't worry now, I've died so many times I think I'm pretty much invincible," replied Will. The Chief smiled, and then turned back to Boss. The reunions were over and it was time to concentrate back on the Covenant threat.

"Is there a Military camp anywhere close by here?" asked the Chief.

"As a matter of fact, yes there is," said Boss, "the pilot told us to head there before doing anything else, said there was some new stuff for us." The Chief nodded, and then tried to raise Niner up on the COM link to tell him where to meet. But when he tried, he couldn't reach them. Either they had their COM off or the message wasn't getting through, meaning there was something in the area jamming their signals. He decided to try again at the base and they set off. Boss was on point, knowing where to go to get to the base. The others followed behind him in pairs, the Chief and Ordo were right behind him on either side with Scorch and Will behind the two of them. Gett and Adams were next then Etain and Jusik were taking up the rear, their senses in overdrive trying to pick up any hostiles in the area as they were still close to the Covenant base. They walked for a while, out of the closed city streets and out into a more open

highway. As they were walking the Chief heard both Etain and Jusik at the same time try to get their attention.

"What is it?" asked the Chief as they both approached him.

"Something's up ahead," said Etain, "It's a threat, though they aren't aware of our presence." The Chief stopped walking and sure enough, he heard gun and plasma firing up ahead.

"We can still sneak up on them if they're distracted," said Jusik, assuming it was some Covenant. The Chief nodded, told Boss what was happening, and Chief let Etain and Jusik take point.

"How far away are they?" asked the Chief, as he couldn't see any enemies on his motion detector.

Jusik paused a moment before answering, "About forty meters ahead." Just then, the plasma fire stopped for a moment and they heard a scream. But this wasn't a scream the Chief expected.

It was a child's scream.

"Oh, God, no," said Adams, and ran forward.

"Adams!" yelled Boss, and he ran after him. The Chief was just about to yell to them when he realized how close they were, there were several contacts on his motion detector identified as enemies. With the rest of the group following him, he ran forward and in no time he saw who the enemies were. There were a couple of brutes and a few jackals who were shooting a door to a building that sat somewhat away from the highway that was mostly in ruins, with only one story left. Listening, the Chief heard another scream and saw that it was coming from inside the building. But then, as he watched, he saw a frag grenade fly out of the window and land at one of the jackal's feet, completely vaporizing it as it exploded and taking out the rest of the jackals. On the hill they were on, Boss had caught up with Adams and was holding him back.

"There are Marines and children in there," said the Chief, "Jusik, Etain, and Gett you stay here and keep watch. Ordo, Scorch, and Will you watch the door. Boss and Adams, you're with me." As he ran forward with Boss and Adams, one of the brutes came forward towards the door, completely oblivious to the fact that the Chief was running at him. The brute lifted its leg and with a mighty heave kicked the door right off of its hinges. It entered the building quickly followed by the other brute and from inside a high pitched scream and gunfire echoed around the streets. The Chief sprinted faster and entered the building, Boss and Adams entering right behind him. He saw towards the back of the room there were two Marines standing in front of two children, trying to protect them from the brutes. They couldn't do much as one brute grabbed the neck of a marine and lifted it off of the ground, breaking the Marine's neck with its hand. The Marine fell to the ground in a heap as the other Marine fired on the brute. Boss and Adams immediately joined in and brought the Brute down in moments.

The other brute looked around at the sound of gunfire behind him and saw his partner fall to the ground. The brute roared in fury, charging at the nearest person who was Adams. He dove out of the way

over some furniture and the brute crashed into the wall, leaving a massive hole. Boss took advantage of this and fired a few shotgun blasts into the back of the brute, causing dark blue blood to splatter on the walls and the brute to fall to the ground, dead. When the fighting was over, Adams went forward to kneel by the dead Marine as Boss and the Chief went to the children, who looked no older than eight-years-old. They stared at them with awe, but also with fear as the two of them approached.

"Don't worry," said the Marine, who went to kneel beside the boy and the girl, "They're on our side." The girl was already in tears, holding on for dear life to the boy, who stared at the Chief with a look in his eye that he didn't recognize.

"Oh no," said Adams, and the Chief and Boss looked over. The Chief didn't understand what was going on, but Boss did as he walked over and put his hand on Adams shoulder. The Chief walked over to see the dead Marine and looked at looking at his tags, it said Pvt. Scorenty.

"He didn't want to do this," said Adams, his eyes shut tightly; "He didn't want to fight in this war. He didn't want to die." The Chief looked down at Scorenty, his eyes staring lifeless at the ceiling and his neck bent at an odd angle. His heart felt something for a moment. Was it grief? But he quickly pushed it aside; he had to keep his head clear. While Boss talked to Adams he turned to talk to the other Marine in the room.

"What's your name, soldier?" he asked.

"Corporal Brian Metinay, Master Chief," he replied, "We were trying to get back to the Marine camp when we found these kids, they hadn't been able to find their parents during the evacuation and got lost. When we found them the Covies ambushed us and we holed ourselves in here, and that's when you guys found us."

"Are you alright?" asked the Chief to the kids. The boy nodded, but the girl turned her face into the boy's chest as he held onto her.

"We were heading to the Marine base as well," said the Chief, addressing Metinay again, "we'll help you out."

Relief flooded into Metinay's eyes, "Oh man, thanks Chief, I didn't think we would make it on our own." The Chief led the way outside of the house with Boss, Adams, Metinay, and the children following him. He approached Scorch and Will, who were standing next to each other.

"What's with him?" asked Scorch, seeing how Adam's head hung low.

"There was a Marine in there that he knew," the Chief replied, "he died."

"Man," said Scorch, watching Adams walk over beside Boss, "there's too much death in a war."

That was not what the Chief expected to hear, especially from Scorch who seemed to be the most laid back of them all. In response he just

nodded, not wanting to talk about the topic in depth.

"Inside we found two children, a boy and a girl and we need to get them to the Military base otherwise they're going to die out here. I want you two to watch over them, and make sure they don't get hurt."

"You got it, Chief," said Scorch.

"We've got it covered," said Will.

"Good," he said, and then addressed everyone in the group, waiting for Etain, Jusik, and Gett to come down the hill side to meet them, "we need to get to the base before more Covenant arrive. Let's move."

* * *

>On the bridge of the Covenant Cruiser, *Cynical*, the commandos, Johnson, and Miranda sat in the semi-darkness, waiting to arrive at Earth through Slipspace. *Cynical* had been a brute held Cruiser, until the Commander and his squad of elites had stormed the ship and taken control. Now, they were only ten minutes from Earth.

Fi had figured out that the Commander's real name was Rtas 'Vadumee, his nickname Half-Jaw because of his two missing mandibles. Half-Jaw now stood beside the Arbiter, the two of them talking to each other in their own language and concentrating on the displays in front of them with the Monitor floating around and talking to people, asking them if they wanted to know anything more about Earth and the Ark. They all didn't notice the conversation that was going on between Fi and Atin.

"I just don't see how this is going to work out," said Atin, "From the small amount of time being here you can see the hatred between the humans and the Covenant."

"But the thing is," replied Fi, "We all have a common goal now, to get rid of the Covenant's threat."

"You know that the Elites and humans aren't just going to shake hands and make up though," said Atin.

"You can say that again," muttered Johnson and the two Commandos turned to look at him, "You forgot that I can hear everything you're saying."

"Well, as long as the elites can't," said Atin, who was now looking at the Arbiter. Fi could see the point Atin was making, the rogue Covenant were still Covenant to the humans, and would be for a long time. But he felt that if they could push that fact aside, this could work out. He thought that Miranda Keyes had read his mind when she spoke to the three of them.

"Once we all realize that the elites, grunts, and hunters are no longer a part of the Covenant, things will be easier," she said, "They aren't planning on destroying Earth anymore, and don't plan on wiping us out. They are concentrated on the Covenant that is still there, mostly the brutes and the Prophets who betrayed them."

"But can we trust them, ma'am?" asked Johnson, "Will they, later down the road, turn their backs on us and start doing what they all had started out doing when they declared war on us?"

"You know that I can't answer that," she said, "But you three saw how when the Arbiter saw that everyone's lives were in danger, including his and his race, he put aside the differences between us and helped us take out Tartarus when he could have easily killed us to get us out of the way."

Fi was about to reply when a shadow descended upon them and they all looked up to see the Arbiter standing there.

"We are almost at Earth," he said, "Commander, I suggest you get ready to send a message to the human forces there so they do not fire upon us." Miranda nodded in agreement, stood up, and walked over to where Half-Jaw was standing by the console. Fi noticed that Johnson was watching the elites intently, ready if they went back on their promise and tried to hurt Miranda.

"They won't hurt her," Fi said to Johnson, "Not with us here."

Johnson snorted, "Yeah, I'm sure we could put up a fight in here even if they did." He then gestured to the doors where a hunter pair stood on either side, on guard.

"We could take them," said Fi, and Johnson grinned.

"What's up with you, Fi?" asked Atin, "You're actually being serious, for once."

"I guess you're just rubbing off on me, _ner vod_," he replied.

"We have arrived," announced one of the elites that were stationed on the bridge.

"I'll contact Lord Hood," said Miranda, and she typed in a code onto the console and pressed the send button. They all waited in tense silence, wondering how Hood was going to react, when he appeared on screen.

"Commander Keyes? What is going on?" he asked, then noticed the Arbiter and Half-Jaw standing behind her and his eyes widened in alarm, "Have you been captured?"

"It's alright, sir," she said, "They are on our side."

His eyes narrowed at this, but instead he only said, "Explain." She launched into the explanation of what had happened at the Library, where her and Johnson had been taken, how Fi, Atin, and Johnson had met up with the Arbiter and had worked together to help her escape from Tartarus and prevent Delta Halo from activating.

"We then boarded this Cruiser and came to Earth as fast as we could," she finished.

Lord Hood stood silent for a moment, and then said, "It explains why there are Covenant ships firing on each other, and why most of the

Covenant attacking Cairo Station have been brutes, jackals, and drones. But why did you leave the Covenant?"

"Our prophets have betrayed us, and sent the brutes to wipe out our entire race," answered Half-Jaw, "We then left, with the grunts and the hunters standing by our side."

Hood nodded, "I would like to speak with youâ€|"

"Rtas 'Vadumee," Half-Jaw finished for him, "I will land my ship on your station, with your permission."

Hood turned to someone off screen and consulted with them, then turned back, "Granted, you are to land in docking bay twenty-two. Now, where is Sergeant Johnson?" Johnson got up from where he was sitting and went over by Miranda,

"Right here, sir," he said, saluting.

"Johnson, I want you to take the two commandos and head to Theta Base. The Master Chief and his team are heading there as we speak. I want you to meet up with him and tell them about the Ark."

"Yes, sir."

"Commander Keyes," Hood said, "I would like you to come with Rtas 'Vadumee."

"Yes, sir," she replied.

"Cairo, out," he said, and then the screen went blank. As soon as it did, Fi got up and motioned at Atin to follow him, he wanted to hear what they were talking about. As he walked up to them, the Arbiter was talking.

"I will go with you," he said to Johnson, "We can use a Phantom to bring us to the base, and I can bring some elite soldiers to fight with you against the Covenant."

Johnson nodded but didn't say anything; Fi knew he didn't like the idea of the Arbiter coming with him.

"I will accompany you as well," said the Monitor, who was been unusually quiet during the conversation, "I do want to see the Ark."

"We better go," said Johnson, "I really want to be on the damn ground."

* * *

>As Boss arrived at the Marine base, Theta Base, he saw many Marines and ODS'Ts walking around whether they were talking, gearing up, or just lounging around on a deserved break. The Chief walked forward with Boss and the others towards the entrance, where an ODS'T stopped him.<p><p>

"Name and rank," he said.

"He can't be serious?" whispered Scorch to Boss, and he had to agree

with him. It seemed that the Chief was known by every military personnel they met. But the Chief didn't seem to mind as he answered,

"Master Chief Spartan-117." The ODST merely nodded and backed up, letting them pass. As they walked in, Boss noticed that he and Scorch were getting a lot of stares as by now, there were probably a lot of rumors about the people who had come through the portal. Boss just ignored them and continued to follow the Chief.

"Hey!" Boss turned around at the yell, and saw none other than Darman waving at them. Darman ran forward to meet him with Niner and Kal Skirata following him more slowly.

"It's good to see you guys," Darman said, he then walked forward and hugged Etain, who had also come forward to meet him.

Boss saw by the Chief's stance that he was confused and muttered, "I'll explain later."

"How did you guys get here?" asked Ordo.

"Found a group of Marines," answered Skirata, "They told us where to go, and we got the Doctor here safely."

"I'm going to go talk to the CO here," said the Chief, "I'll meet up with you later." He then walked away further into the camp and disappeared from sight. Boss wondered why he went alone, but didn't give it a second thought as he started talking with the others. Apparently the Marines here had known they were coming and set them up a place to stay, with food and a chance to rest. When they got to their resting quarters, Boss felt how tired he was.

"Go to sleep," said Kal, noticing him fighting to stay awake.

"I'm fine, Sarge," he replied, trying to sit up straighter.

"Don't even try to fool me," Skirata said, "Get some sleep, I'll wake you if anything happens." Boss was about to try and argue some more when he decided not to, it wasn't worth it and he knew Sarge would beat him anyways. Getting comfortable, he took off his helmet and rested his head against a box and soon enough, he was asleep.

* * *

>Boss felt like he had gotten no more than five minutes of sleep when he heard yelling and felt someone shake him awake. He opened his eyes to see Kal's face in the darkness of night.<p><p>

"Sorry to wake you up so soon, but we've got company." Boss was instantly wide awake, putting his helmet and picking up his battle rifle he quickly followed Kal to where the others were standing.

"What's going on?" asked Boss.

"We've got a Phantom coming towards the base," said Adams.

"Wait, just one?"

"Yeah, that's what we were wondering about too," said Jusik, "Sergeant Carter wants us to figure out what the Phantom is doing."

"Sergeant _Greg _Carter, the one who saved us from Grievous the first time we faced him?"

"That's him," answered Scorch.

"One last question," he said, knowing he was delaying them by asking so many questions, "Where's-"

"-Darman, Niner, and Etain?" finished Skirata, "They're still sleeping; we figured we didn't need so many people so we let them sleep in."

"Now let's go before the Covenant are able to walk right into the base," said Ordo.

"Don't worry, we're going," said Skirata, assuming leadership as he lead them towards the entrance and back out onto the open highway. They all remained quiet so if there were any Covenant out here, they would be able to hold the element of surprise. They only walked for a few minutes when Skirata spoke again.

"Carter said it was around here the Phantom was going to land, should be here any second."

"And when it lands, we get to give them a good welcoming party," said Adams, grinning. Boss noticed that he had overcome his grief for Scorenty, as they would need him to be at his best in the upcoming battles. A Marine fighting with highly trained Spartans, Commandos, and Jedi didn't fit well, and if he lagged behind at all Boss didn't want to think about what would happen to him.

But then, behind them in the darkness he heard a few gunshots and a yell, "Scorch, hold your fire!"

Boss instantly turned around with his battle rifle at his shoulder but saw that it was the Chief standing there, his headlamp on his helmet turned on. His shields were shimmering and Boss saw that Scorch had shot him.

"Fierfek, Chief, don't scare me like that!" said Scorch, lowering his battle rifle.

"Sorry about that," said the Chief, "I thought Sergeant Carter told you that I was meeting up with you."

"He must've forgotten," said Skirata. But then, a sound echoed around the clearing. It started out faintly, but then picked up as Boss realized what it was just before the Phantom appeared out of the sky, its light casting an eerie purple glow on the grass below it.

"Get down!" hissed Skirata, but he had no need too. Everyone had thrown themselves down and were lying prone in the long grass, able to see what came off of the Phantom.

The Covenant dropship had slowed to a stop and hovered above the ground about twenty feet, its gravity lift activated. Boss waited

tensely to see what came down the lift. What if it were hunters? They didn't have any heavy firepower with them. But then, something came down the lift and they stared in shock at who it was.

It was Sergeant Johnson.

* * *

>Fred led his team through the winding corridors of the Covenant Cruiser, Blood in Wrath, trying to remain undetected by any Covenant forces. What Obi-wan had said about the elites knowing they were here but not doing anything about it disturbed him, though there was nothing he could do about it without jeopardizing the mission. His team traveled in a single file line behind him, with Obi-wan right behind him incase he discovered anything else and Linda at the rear, her sharp eyes surveying the area for any enemies. But suddenly, the lights in the corridor they had been walking down turned completely black and they couldn't see a thing. Fred immediately turned on his headlamp along with Linda and Kelly, Obi-wan activated his light saber for light, but the commandos didn't do anything.

"Do you-" Fred started to ask over their COM link.

"Night vision," Fixer answered before he could finish. Fred nodded and continued onward, knowing that the Covenant had done this deliberately to try and throw them off. This confirmed Obi-wan's thoughts, the Covenant knew they were here and he knew they would start coming after them. Sure enough, three camouflaged elites walked into the entrance of the corridor, holding energy swords. Fred's reflexes kicked in and he open fired on them with his battle rifle, catching one elite in the side and drenching purple blood on the floor. The three elites retreated immediately, but when they did and were out of sight one yelled something to him.

"Hold your fire; we are on your side now, Demon!" Fred narrowed his eyes in confusion, he didn't believe him, but why would he yell that? He held up his hand in a fist to tell the others to hold their positions and walked forward to the corner and saw one of the elites holding his side as blood seeped through his fingers.

"We are telling the truth!" the elite spoke desperately, knowing how close he was to death. His tone of voice threw Fred off for a second and for a moment, he believed him, but then he heard the slightest noise of a something moving behind him and he turned around with his battle rifle raised. But before he could fire, he saw that the elite had deactivated his camouflage and was looking at him, his black armor gleaming in the light of Fred's headlamp.

"We are not here to harm you, but to warn you," the elite spoke, deactivating his energy sword and hooking the hilt on his belt. Fred was becoming more confused still, the elite was leaving itself completely open to Fred, who could easily finish him off with a shot to the head. Fred's team was where he had left them, ready to fire if the elites tried anything, so he decided to make more sense of the situation.

"Why?" asked Fred.

"As I said before, we are on your side in this war now," he replied

simply, "We are no longer part of the Covenant." Fred noticed that he spat the word 'Covenant', as if he despised it. "You have missed much since you boarded this ship, every one of your friends have returned and are now stationed on Earth. Members of my race have returned as well, and bring grave news of death and betrayal within the Covenant."

"But why help us?" Fred asked again, who had still not lowered his battle rifle, "Why are you helping us when you could easily try to kill us?"

The elite gave a snort which easily passed off as a laugh, "Demon, I do not do this because I wish to, but because I was ordered too. If it was up to me, you would be dead by now."

"Let him try," muttered Sev into the COM link, his sniper rifle trained on the elite talking to Fred.

"You said you were to here to warn us," said Fred.

"Yes, this ship is very close to being destroyed and will not last long even with your space station ceasing fire upon us," he growled. "We are here to warn you that if you do not leave, your death will be certain. And as much as I hate to admit it, we need you if we are to defeat the Covenant." When he said that, he turned his head towards Obi-wan, Sev, and Fixer, who from what Fred could tell looked confused. The elite saw it too and said, "You are the ones who know the most about this General Grievous and Darth Vader, and to defeat them we are going to need your skills."

"This Darth Vader," said Obi-wan, who was speaking for the first time, "what did he look like?"

The elite shook his head, "I did not see him myself, only heard the rumors. A human that went bad, nearly killed and burned alive but saved and brought back more powerful than he had been." Fred saw Obi-wan's eyes cloud with both surprise and pain, and wondered what had happened to cause that. He decided now was not the time to ask.

"So, let's say all this you have been saying is true," suggested Fred, "Do you know if Lord Hood knows about this?"

The elite nodded, "Yes, your commander is speaking with our own commander. They have come to certain agreements, which lead me and my squad to warn you of this ship's near destruction." But before Fred could ask anything else, a voice came in over his COM link.

"Code red! Code red! The Attero is hit, and hit hard. She's not going to make it!" It was the voice of Captain Denello on the ship Attero, which had given them earlier transport.

"Can you hold it together, Captain?" This time it was Lord Hood.

"No, sir, we're not going to last much longer. The Covenant fleet that we found earlier has arrived! I repeat, the fleet that we found-ARRRGH!" After the yell, the COM link went dead and there was nothing else to hear.

Captain Denello and the _Attero _had fallen.

* * *

>Author's Note: Man, that chapter took longer than I thought it would. But I have a question, now that the Chief and Boss are back together their POV's (Point of Views) are going to be mixed. Who's POV would you rather see more, Chief or Boss? It's up to you, and please review! It's always appreciated!

Also, quick thanks to TigerTank for reading over my past couple of chapters for me and to freelancer92 for the chapter title. He knew how stressed out I was that night. :P

34. Suicide Run

****Author's note:**** I apologize for the millionth time for a long update, but I'm trying to make it worth it though this is a little on the short side. I don't have much to say here, except of course, enjoy!

* * *

>Suicide Run

Boss was frozen to the spot, he couldn't decide on what to do. The last he had heard of Johnson was that he and Commander Keyes had been captured in the Library along with everyone else. His question was answered as Keyes came down after him, closely followed by a few elites. The elite in front had on different armor than the other two, though he couldn't tell what color it was through his night vision in his helmet. Boss knew what he had to do now, eliminate the elites and get Johnson and Keyes out of there. As he lined up his scope of his battle rifle with one of the elites, two more people came out of the Phantom. His eyes widened in surprise as he recognized Fi and Atin, standing there calmly as if they were standing by their own teammates.

"Hey, Chief, I know you're hiding out there," said Johnson, looking around at the edges of the clearing. "You can come out." To Boss's right, he noticed the Chief hesitate, and then push himself up so he was standing.

"What's going on, Commander?" asked the Chief as everyone else in his group stood up.

"I'll explain in detail when we're in a more secure area," Miranda replied, "Don't worry, the elites are on our side, but we need to get back to the base quickly." But suddenly, the Chief grabbed his battle rifle from his back and aimed it towards Keyes and the others underneath the Phantom. Boss stared in astonishment, had the Chief gone insane?

"Chief, what are you doing?" she asked, alarmed.

The Chief ignored her question, "what the hell is that thing doing here?" Boss had never heard the Chief so angry; he was definitely pissed at something. Keyes turned around and looked at something, and Boss saw what she was looking at. Boss hadn't noticed the little

droid like ball of blue light floating above Johnson, it having blended in with the lights of the Phantom.

"Chief, the Monitor saved our lives," said Atin, "including yours."

"The Monitor?" Asked the Chief, still keeping his battle rifle steadily aimed at the Monitor, "didn't he tell you his real name?"

"Reclaimer, this is not necessaryâ€|" The Monitor started to say, but the Chief cut him off.

"His name is 343 Guilty Spark." Boss had no idea what that meant, but he saw that it had an impact on both Keyes and Johnson as they had frozen in shock.

"Is he right?" asked Keyes, turning around to face the Monitor.

He didn't answer right away, obviously thinking of a way to get out of this, but when he couldn't he just said, "Reclaimer, I said this wasn't necessary."

"What are you doing here?" asked the Chief, "Haven't you tried to activate Halo enough?" Boss turned to the Chief abruptly. This little ball had tried to activate Halo?

"My only task is to stop the Flood from spreading," replied Guilty Spark, "You and the construct endangered this task, and I was forced to try and remove you from the situation."

"That still doesn't explain why you are here," the Chief said simply.

"Have they not told you about the Ark?"

The Chief turned his helmet toward Keyes, showing he was looking for an explanation.

"Not in the open, Chief," she said, "This is what I wanted to explain to you at the base. I know the Monitor tried to kill you and activate the first Halo, but he helped us to stop Delta Halo from activating. If it wasn't for him, everything in this universe would have been destroyed."

The Chief remained silent for a few moments; Boss figured he was thinking of something to do with the Monitor.

"Fine, he can stay but on a few conditions," he finally said.

"I am listening, Reclaimer," the Monitor replied.

"First, you do anything we tell you and nothing we don't tell you. Second, you keep the Sentinels off of our backs and no trying to kill or injure any of us. And for the last one, no helping anyone else other than us, though most of those things fall under the first condition."

The Monitor remained silent for a moment, probably trying to think of a loophole in the rules, but he gave in, "I agree, and I will listen

to what you say."

"Good," the Chief replied, finally lowering his battle rifle, "Don't follow any of those and you'll be lying in pieces on the ground."

Keyes cut in before another argument started, "Lead the way back to base, Chief."

* * *

>Fred sprinted after the elites as they lead the way to the escape pods, the situation now becoming urgent. According to the elites, the Covenant Cruiser they were currently on was going to be destroyed in a matter of only ten minutes. If they didn't get off, they were doing to go down with this ship.<p><p>

The rest of his team followed closely behind him, now bunched up together and running along with him, no longer in the neat single file line. Once they reached the escape pods, they saw that there were three pods there. They were very similar to the UNSC "Bumblebee" pod that were used for their ships, but had the distinction of a Covenant vehicle Fred had come to be familiar with.

"My elites and I will each drive a pod," said the lead elite with the black armor, "We will follow your direction." Fred looked at him for a second, he never thought he would come to trust this elite, but he had no choice as arguing would just cause them to waste time. He nodded and followed the black armored elite into the pod with Obi-wan and Kelly following him in. The others in his team would be on the other pods.

"Is everyone ready?" Fred asked over his COM link to his team, he got two acknowledgement lights from Kelly and Linda and soon after he heard Fixer and Sev tell him they were ready, and Obi-wan beside him Fred a nod. The elite looked at him questionably, and Fred gave him the okay sign. In response the elite turned and tapped in a few commands onto the console and five seconds later the pod ejected from the hull of the Covenant Cruiser and was flying into the vast reaches of space. Fred immediately opened a COM channel with Cairo Station to talk to Hood.

"This is Spartan-104, what are our orders, Sir? The Blood in Wrath has been destroyed and an elite squad has joined up with us."

"You heard about the Attero?" asked Hood, and Fred noticed that there was no hint of surprise at the mention the elite squad. So he had been telling the truth.

"Yes, sir," replied Fred regretfully. Hood sighed, and then talked to one of his lieutenants on the bridge, getting information on what was happening.

"Okay, listen up," said Hood, his voice firm, "There is a UNSC frigate called the Enervate, under the command of Captain Aaron Rogers. He will pick you and your team up and give you further orders. The elite commander, Rtas 'Vadumee, said that the elite squad is to go with you. Good luck."

"Thank you, sir, Spartan-104, out," Fred then turned off the COM link

and turned to talk to the elite, "Did you say what your name was?"

Without turning to look at him, the elite responded, "No, it is Yaas 'Yanomee."

"Wellâ€¦Yaas," Fred felt awkward saying the name, but he continued, "One of our ships is going to pick us up, and you and your squad will be coming with us."

Fred saw Yaas's mandibles wrinkle, as if in disgust, and he asked fiercely, "On whose orders?"

"Rtas 'Vadumee's," Fred replied. He saw Yaas unwrinkled his mandible, but he continued to stare straight ahead and did not reply.

"Spartan-104, this is the _Enervate_, please respond."

Fred immediately responded, "This is Spartan-104, are you coming to pick us up?"

"Yes we are," the man replied, "where are you?"

"We're in the Covenant escape pods that just jettisoned from _Blood in Wrath_ and are flying in open space; I'll send you our coordinates now."

"Copy that, we'll come pick you up, _Enervate_ out." The COM link shut off, leaving the inside of the escape pod silent.

* * *

>As the Chief led the way into the Marine Base Theta, right outside of New Mombasa, everyone looked up at the site of the Arbiter and the two elites following him. He had instantly recognized the Arbiter after their brief meeting with Gravemind. The Marines and ODSTs started muttering among themselves, casting suspicious looks at the elites. One marine even had the guts to raise his battle rifle to his shoulder.<p><p>

"Stand down, marine," said Commander Keyes, stepping up besides the Chief, "these elites mean no harm."

"Bullshit!" called an ODST furiously from the Chief's right, "They are just here to get information out of us!"

"Calm down," said the Chief, staring the ODST down, "she's right, they're on our side." There were more outcries from the surrounding soldiers.

"They're here to kill us!"

"The Covenant is trying to destroy Earth, not make friends!"

"You can't trust 'em!"

"Lock it up, Marines!" yelled a voice above all the other. The Chief looked over to see Sergeant Greg Carter glaring at the Marines around him. "Whether you like it or not, these Elites are on our side now,

so you better get used to it!" The Marines and ODSs around him stood there in silence for a moment, but then turned back to what they were originally doing, talking among themselves.

"I'm sorry about that ma'am," said Carter, addressing Miranda, "I just got word from Lord Hood on what's going on and haven't been able to pass on the news to the marines yet."

Miranda nodded in understanding, "Is there a place in private where we could talk?"

"Yes there is, follow me," he said. The Chief was about to follow when he saw Fi was trying to get his attention. Already knowing where Carter was leading Miranda, he walked over to see what he wanted.

"I don't think Atin and I are needed," he said, "So we're just going to go catch up with the others."

The Chief nodded in agreement, "That's okay, the rest of you can relax as well, you're going to need it."

"Thanks Chief,

"I'll come with you," said Boss, stepping forward, "I like to keep updated on things." Together, Boss and the Chief made their way over to Carter's resting area and saw that Miranda, Johnson, and Carter were waiting for them.

"I thought you would like to hear this, Chief," said Miranda.

"Thank you, ma'am," he replied, while Boss took a seat on an ammo crate. The Chief chose to stand while he listened to Miranda and Johnson's report. Miranda explained everything, starting from the Library mission, how she and the others had been captured by brutes and then the Covenant had separated her and Johnson from the others and taken to Delta Halo, how Johnson had met up with Fi, Atin, and the Arbiter and how the four of them had rescued her from Tartarus and killed him, preventing him from activating Halo. But when she got to the part about the other Halos and the Ark, the Chief stared at her in astonishment.

"There are more than two Halos?" he asked.

Miranda nodded gravely, knowing what the Chief had gone through on the past two, "There are, but the Ark can control them all."

"How?"

"Simple, Reclaimer," spoke a voice he instantly recognized as 343 Guilty Spark. With a shot of impatience with the little robot he looked up. He was floating between Miranda and Johnson, the Chief hadn't seen him.

"How do you do it, then?" asked the Chief, not bothering to make his voice level.

"Well, first, you must find the Ark," Guilty Spark replied, "And I can help you from there."

"Where is it?" asked the Chief.

"On Earth." The Chief was surprised to see that Miranda has answered his question, "The Monitor told us before we left Delta Halo."

"But how can that be?" asked Boss, speaking for the first time, "Surely you would have found it by now?"

"It_ is_ buried underground," said Guilty Spark, in a matter-of-fact tone.

"Still," Boss continued, "It wouldn't be hard to find a large, metal structure in the dirt, would it?"

"I wouldn't think so," said Miranda, her head shaking in confusion, "Though there may be things we don't know."

"Those ONI spooks are always hiding things from us, 'protecting us' they call it," said Johnson scornfully.

"ONI?" asked Boss.

"Office of Naval Intelligence," the Chief answered for him, "Finds out information for the UNSC."

"Wait," said Carter, bringing them back into the original conversation, "you said the Ark was buried underground?"

"Correct," said Guilty Spark.

"Oh no," said Carter, his face turning pale and he stared at the others in horror, "The Covenant have found it."

* * *

>The escape pod Fred had been in slowly pulled into the docking bay of the Enervate, the elite landing carefully. A small bump signaled that they had landed, and looking out through the cockpit window Fred saw that many Marines were set up in a half circle around the escape pod, aiming their array of battle rifles and SMGs at it. Yaas was getting up to leave when Fred stepped in front of him and he growled right in Fred's face.

"Look," said Fred, holding his ground, "let me leave first; if you get off by yourself the marines might get the wrong idea and maybe shoot you." Yaas stared him down for a moment longer, than backed up, allowing Fred to pass. Fred walked down the plank and through the open door, where the Marines could see him. He saw many of them looked relieved to see a Spartan, but a couple of them still had their guns raised.

"Don't shoot anyone coming off of the escape pods, they're all friendly," he said. Fred saw that the Marines looked confused, and he knew they did not know about the change in their allies. Fred had only found out nearly half an hour ago.

As Fred stood there, the other two escape pods came in after their, landing on either side. Behind Fred, Obi-wan and Kelly walked out, slowly followed by Yaas. The Marines actions were automatic; they aimed their guns again at the black-armored elite. One even called

out, "Look out behind you!"

"I told you, he's on our side," Fred repeated, and the Marines stared at him in disbelief. On the other two escape pods, the rest of his team got out also followed by the other two members of Yaas's squad. One elite was holding his side and limping in pain, though the bullet wound Fred had given him had been patched up. "I need to speak with Captain Rogers; can one of you take me to the bridge? The rest of my team needs some rest." One of the marines, who didn't seem surprised at the sight of the elites, stepped forward.

"Sergeant Jay Ostrado, I'll take you there."

"Sergeant Ostrado," said Fred, nodding, "lead the way to the bridge. Also have one of your marines escort the rest of my team for ammo and supplies."

"Yes, sir," replied Ostrado, and then turned to talk to a short, bald marine to his right, "Merca! You heard him, escort the team to the armory!"

"Yes, sir!" Yelled the Marine and quickly headed over to the others. Fred wasn't surprised to see Obi-wan leave the group and come over to him.

"I would like to come with you, if you don't mind," he said, holding his hands together at waist height, his sleeves of his robes covering his hands.

"Thought you would like to," said Fred, then the two of them followed Ostrado through the door of the Docking Bay and up through the corridors. After about five minutes, they reached the door of the bridge.

"I'll wait out here for you," said Ostrado, stopping outside the doors, "When you're done talking to the Captain, I can take you down to the armory." After saying this he pushed a button on the door and stepped off to the side, allowing them to enter the bridge. When they passed through the door, it slid shut behind them with a small thud. Fred walked further into the room closely followed by Obi-wan. Looking around, he saw several lieutenants sitting at consoles around the room, either checking stats of the ship or typing in commands. At the far end of the room, standing closely to the window that showed the battle above Earth in space, stood a man with closely shaven brown hair with his backs turned to him. He was leaning on a railing and looking out into space, and did not notice them until Fred spoke.

"Captain Rogers," Fred said, snapping a salute. Rogers turned around immediately and returned the salute.

"At ease," he said, and Fred lowered his hand, "you came earlier than I thought you would." He remained silent for a few moments, and then spoke again, "I assume you're here for further orders?"

"Yes, sir," replied Fred.

"Well, the Master Chief has returned along with his team and is currently positioned on Earth as well as Commander Keyes and his group. I want you to head down there as well, there's nothing more

you can do up here in space."

Fred felt a small bit of relief in his chest, no more zero-gee gravity.

"When can we leave?" asked Fred,

"As soon as possible," replied Rogers, "Now I suggest now that you head to the armory and get geared up." Suddenly, Roger's face looked like it was chiseled out of stone as he said, "This upcoming battle will be the last battle with the Covenant, whether it goes in our favor, or theirs."

* * *

>"Chief, you're going to need these things we've got for you!" yelled Sergeant Carter behind the Chief. He had started walking away as soon as Carter had mentioned the Covenant had found the Ark, ignoring his requests of being introduced to the new weapons and vehicles. If the Chief wasted time with that, the Covenant could have well taken the Ark by then. Carter followed behind him, not giving up, "C'mon Chief! Just listen to me!"<p><p>

The Chief spun around to face Carter, who halted in his tracks, his eyes wide. It wasn't everyday that a Spartan got right in your face, "If we waste time with new weapons, the Covenant will have an advantage over us."

"But Chief, our new vehicle will get you there faster, and make up the lost time," Carter explained, "If you spare ten minutes you'll be out of here in no time. We won't waste time with the weapons." The Chief paused for a moment to think. If this new vehicle was fast, faster than the warthog, then they could arrive quicker and make up the time that they would spend actually explaining the vehicle. But would it actually be that fast? He decided to find out.

"Alright," said the Chief, finally giving in, "Show me, but quickly." He followed Carter to where a group of Marines were crowding around a vehicle, busy getting it ready for its departure. When the Chief and Carter approached, the Marines quickly backed up, not wanting to be in the way.

"Let me introduce you to the M274 ULATV, otherwise known as the Mongoose," said Carter, gesturing to the Mongoose with his hand. The Chief looked over the small four-wheeler, a lot smaller than the Warthog it looked like it could only hold two people at a time. "I'll show you how to work it, and then I'll send you on your way." Carter explained how to work it, what its limits were, and what it used. It was able to reach a speed of 60 mph, giving him the time to reach the Ark.

"It looks like it holds two?" asked the Chief.

"Yes, it does, one driver and one riding one the back," Carter replied, "But if you know how to work it, you can leave anytime you want."

"Wait, Chief," said a voice behind him. He turned to see that Miranda and Boss had followed them over. "You can't leave yet," Miranda continued, "We might need you here."

"Ma'am, no offense, but if the Covenant are able to take the Ark and use it, me staying here won't help."

She sighed, and then said, "I couldn't convince Johnson either, he's already taken a whole platoon of Marines to take on the Covenant forces around the digging site that the Covenant have set up."

"Ma'am, let me go with them," the Chief said, "I can get to the Ark on the Mongoose and delay Truth long enough for everyone else to get there. If we don't do anything, we're as good as dead."

"Chief, you heading in there by yourself is suicide," said Miranda, not convinced.

"Hey Chief," said Boss, "how many people can that thing hold?"

The Chief knew instantly what he was going to do, "Boss, no-"

"If it can hold two people, you know I'm coming," Boss said, cutting him off, "I'm not going to let you go in there by yourself, brothers don't let one another do that."

The Chief stood there, looking at Boss through his visor as Boss did the same. The Chief knew he wouldn't be able to convince him, as Miranda would not convince himself of going to the Ark.

"Chiefâ€¦" Miranda started, and then paused. She regained control of herself and continued, "You have permission to go to the Ark." The Chief nodded at her to show his thanks, and then turned to Boss, "Lets get weapons and ammo, and then we'll head out."

"Right behind ya, Chief," Boss said, and followed him to the set up armory.

The Chief still didn't want him to come, what he was doing _was_ suicide; there was a very small chance he would make it out alive. But though the main reason for going ahead was to give the others time to get ready to leave, he knew there was another reason at the back of his mind. He knew one person, one _cyborg_ that would be waiting for him to come and have their final fight.

General Grievous.

* * *

>Author's note:** I'm sorry these past few chapters or so have been taking so long to write. I just really don't want to screw up the ending, I've got one in mind though I still need to add in details and that's usually what defines a good ending from a bad one. I'll do my best! Please review, it's always appreciated!

35. The Final Fight Begins

Author's note: I'm sorry for another long update. I actually had this done two weeks ago, but I was out of the country with no internet connection and some other stuff that prevented me from

editing and posting the chapter. But, it's extra long, so enjoy!

* * *

>The Final Fight Begins

The Chief was walking between tents and crates, heading to their resting quarters where the rest of the team was. Boss had convinced him that they should at least say goodbye to the others, as they had no idea what was going to happen when they got out there. When they were approaching the group, Scorch and Will immediately stood up, their helmets off, and approached them to talk to them in private.

"Are you guys seriously doing what we just heard?" asked Scorch.

"If you mean head out on the Mongoose and go to the Ark and buy you some time, then yes," Boss answered casually.

"Its suicide," said Will, looking back and forth between the Chief and Boss, "Grievous and that other guy could be waiting in there for you; they might know what you're doing."

"Will, we know that," the Chief said patiently, "which is why we're heading in there first to distract them while the rest of you head in there undetected."

"Chief, you don't understand," said Scorch, almost desperately, "That other guy, Anakin; he's not the same as Grievous. He can use the force and could crush you in a second."

"He already tried," he replied, "When Jusik and I were cut off by Grievous on the Forerunner ship. He tried using the force to crush me, but I guess it didn't work, as my body didn't give in."

Scorch stood there, not knowing what to say, but Will jumped in to help, "John, don't do this. Fred and the others are coming back as we speak, and with all of us we can storm the Ark and take it from the Covenant."

"I know we can do that," said the Chief, "But by the time we get in there, they could have already activated the Ark. We don't know if they have uncovered it yet or not, and we'll know when they do, they'll activate it as soon as they can."

"Then let us come," said Scorch.

"We can't," said Boss regretfully, "only two can fit on the Mongoose."

Will sighed, the Chief could tell he was giving in, "We're not going to be able to convince you not to go, are we?"

"You can keep trying," said Boss, shrugging, "but it's not going to work."

Scorch grinned, "This is definitely something I should have expected from the two of you."

Will cracked a small smile as well, "Leaders always have to do the

suicide missions."

"Let's go talk to the others," said the Chief, though when Boss and Scorch had turned around, he gave Will a small nod, appreciating that he understood. He followed Will to the others, and saw Omega Squad, freshly reunited, sitting together next to Etain, Jusik, Kal, Ordo, and Gett. When the Chief approached, they all looked up and stopped talking.

"Scorch and Will weren't able to convince you two, were they?" asked Kal. When the Chief shook his head, he sighed, "I didn't think they would. But, uh, Chief? Can I have a word with you in private?" The Chief was surprised, but he followed him to the back end of the quarters behind a tent, where they couldn't be heard. "Listen," Kal started, "I don't know you well, but the fact that Boss would put his life on the line for you shows me enough. It takes a lot to get that kind of loyalty out of a clone, especially a commando. And I'm not talking about the kind of loyalty that you can give him an order and he'll respond, I'm talking about the deep loyalty where he would follow you into Hell without you telling him to."

The Chief could only stare at him, not expecting this man to give him this kind of talk. Very few people had actually truly praised him like that outside of his Spartans, and of them they included CPO Mendez, who was his old instructor, and Dr. Halsey. He didn't know what to say in response, so he just said, "Thank you."

"I would say watch out for Boss," said Kal, looking over at him while he talked to the others, "but he's pretty capable of watching out for himself."

"Very," the Chief replied, "Let's head over there, I need to tell you and the others about what's happening." Kal nodded, knowing the urgency of what was happening, and followed him over.

"What's the plan, Chief?" asked Darman as they saw him approach with Kal.

"As you know, Boss and I are going ahead to delay Truth from activating the Ark. We're doing this because we don't know when Fred and his team get here, but we don't have the time to wait. I'm sorry but you can't come," the Chief said as Jusik opened his mouth to volunteer, "The vehicle that we're taking can only hold two."

"So, we head over there when Fred's team gets here?" asked Scorch.

"Yes," answered Boss, "we'll be able to keep Truth from activating the Ark, but with you guys we can take him down." The Chief saw they understood, killing off Truth would leave the Covenant without a leader and confused, making them vulnerable. That would be the chance for the UNSC to move in and strike.

The Chief and Boss said their goodbyes to the others, and while they grabbed some ammo and headed over to the Mongoose, the Chief thought with confidence that they could win this war.

* * *

>Rtas 'Vadumee, otherwise known as Half-Jaw, stood on the bridge of

the Human space station, Cairo. The Human commander, Lord Hood, stood in front of him, talking to one of his crew members on board about something. Rtas didn't like being here, he wanted to be with the rest of his kind and exacting revenge on the Brutes, but he knew that he had to remain here and make an alliance with this human, if they wanted to have their full revenge on the Brutes as well as the Prophets. He was filled with fury just thinking of the furry beasts.

<p>"Commander," said a voice he recognized as the elite Captain of the Covenant Cruiser, Cynical, "we have an urgent message for you."

Rtas turned away from the Human to talk to him, "What is it?"

"It's a message from one of the Recon Squads you sent to High Charity. They said they have found the Demon's AI being interrogated by that Flood leader, Gravemind. What are your orders, sir?"

"Standby," Rtas replied, and then turned back to Hood.

Hood noticed that he was wanted, "Yes, what is it?"

"One of my Recon Squads has found an AI of yours, the one that is always with that Demon."

"Cortana?" he asked.

"I do not know its name," Rtas replied, shaking his head, "But if you need this AI, my squad can bring it back for you." Hood looked at him distrustfully, but Rtas knew the human had no other choice and Hood came to that conclusion as well, "Alright, thank you."

"Captain?" Rtas spoke into his COM link.

"Yes, sir?" he heard him reply.

"Tell the squad to bring the AI back here, as the Humans are going to need it."

Rtas heard a second of hesitation, as if the Captain didn't believe what he had just said, and then replied, "Yes, sir, I'll relay the message." The COM link then shut off.

"Rtas?" he heard Hood say, and Rtas raised his head to show he was listening. "On Earth, we've just received a message from Marine Base Theta that the Covenant have found the Ark."

Rtas's eyes opened in surprise, "Already?"

Hood nodded solemnly, "Yes, we are sending in most of our teams now to delay their progress."

"I will send some as well," said Rtas, "We cannot let them activate the Ark. But I will need an escort back to the docking bay so I can return to my ship."

"Of course," said Hood, then sent a Corporal that was keeping watch on the bridge to lead him to the docking bay. As Rtas followed the Corporal, he thought of the short alliance he had just made with the Humans. He knew he had no other choice if he and the rest of the

ex-Covenant wanted to fight back against the group they had just left. But, after the Covenant were defeated, what would happen then?

* * *

>Walking over to the Mongoose, Boss noticed how tense the Chief was. What they were going to do was near suicide, but he would never have let the Chief do this on his own. With the two of them, they stood a fighting chance against whatever was waiting for them in the Ark. They didn't even know if the Covenant had uncovered it yet. As they approached the Mongoose at the edge of the base, Sergeant Carter was waiting for them. <p>"You know how to handle it, Chief?" he asked.<p>

"I'll figure it out," the Chief replied.

"I thought you would," Carter said, "Before you head out to the Ark, you'll need to meet up with Sergeant Johnson. He'll send you in the right direction to where the Covenant are digging." The Chief nodded, showing he knew what to do, and got on the Mongoose. Boss got on the back; he had been shown how to position himself. He set his feet firmly on the footholds on the bottom and held on tight to the bar in front of him with his left hand. In his right hand he held a battle rifle and strapped to his back was a rocket launcher, likely that they would meet some heavy artillery on the way there.

"Good luck!" said Carter and backed out of the way as the Chief revved up the Mongoose's engines.

"You ready?" the Chief asked Boss over their single beam COM link.

"Ready when you are," Boss replied, tightening his grip. With a sudden jolt, the Mongoose took off and out into the open field. It would take them five minutes to reach Johnson's position, longer if they had been in a Warthog. Looking around at the landscape, he barely saw anything except for rocks, few trees, and dried patches of grass here and there. It looked like a barren wasteland.

The Mongoose bounced over small bumps and rocks smoothly, the shocks keeping it steadier than the Warthog. The Chief was able to steer it without much trouble and when turning it turned quickly with less drifting. As they drew closer to Johnson's position, he realized that they were heading in the same direction the Covenant base the Chief and his team had landed in. Had the Covenant known for a long time about the Ark? Was that why Truth came?

Boss noticed the Mongoose slow down and up ahead he saw Johnson conversing with two different Marines and when they got closer, he noticed one of them was Adams. At the sound of the Mongoose, the three of them looked up. The one Marine's eyes opened in awe at the two of them towering over them, but Adams wasn't fazed.

"Nice ride, Chief!" he said, smiling.

"She does look good," said Johnson, "But Chief, we've got to move quickly. The Covenant are diggin' up the Ark as we speak. I've sent in a whole company of Marines to distract them but it's not enough, even with the Warthogs and Scorpions I sent in."

"So, I'm guessing that's where we come in?" asked Boss.

"You guessed right," said Johnson, grinning, "We need you two to head in there and give 'em a nice slap in the face to keep them distracted."

"So they haven't dug it up yet?" asked the Chief.

"Not yet," Adams answered this time, "But they're close. We were able to get a Shortsword on recon to check, though it was barely able to make it out in one piece with the amount of weaponry the Covenant have set up."

"Then we better move quickly," said the Chief, looking back at Boss, who nodded.

"It's about three miles north," said Johnson, "The fighting has moved pretty close to here, so watch out and good luck out there." The Chief nodded and revved up the engines once more and took off with Boss hanging onto the back. Looking behind him, he slowly saw Johnson, Adams, and the other Marine fade away into the distance until he could no longer see them. That's when Boss truly realized that he and the Chief were out here on their own, no one to help them out if they ran into trouble. Soon enough, as if he had jinxed it by thinking about it, he heard the unmistakable sounds of explosions and gunfire up ahead. Looking up into the sky, he saw balls of blue plasma and the orange fire of artillery shells exploding in the sky.

Boss held onto his battle rifle more tightly as the Chief drove off of a small hill that launched them a several feet into the air over the heads of a few surprised jackals. By the time they recovered, the Mongoose was out of range for their plasma pistols to reach. Boss fired a few shots behind them to make sure they didn't follow, though they would never be able to keep up.

As they continued forward, the fighting grew more intense. They passed a group of Marines fighting a brute that had started berserking. After that, they met many more brutes and jackals tangled in fights with Marines who all passed by in a blur. The Chief was constantly having to swerve right and left to avoid crashing.

At one point, a group of drones attacked them from above, firing their plasma pistols and needlers. One was even brave enough to land on Boss's arm that was holding onto the Mongoose, trying to make him fall off of the back. Boss was forced to let go and eject his vibroblade into the drone, causing it to emit a loud screech of pain and fly away. But, he couldn't regain his balance as the Chief kept moving forward and started falling backwards. Sensing this, the Chief let go with one hand off the handlebars, turned around, and grabbed Boss's arm, preventing him from falling any further. With a heave, the Chief pulled him forward so he could grab onto the bar. Boss nodded his thanks and the Chief returned to driving the Mongoose.

Though the drone attack had nearly threw them off, things got a lot worse. Explosions were now going off left and right from Wraith tanks in the distance, once even causing their shields to nearly drop and the Mongoose was momentarily thrown onto two wheels before dropping

back down to four. From watching where the Wraith plasma was coming from, he noticed that it was originating from one spot. Near that spot was a circle of clouds cycling around one spot, and in the back of his mind Boss knew that was their destination.

"Hold on!" The Chief's yell brought him back and he saw what was wrong. A Wraith mortar was heading directly towards them, with no time to dodge. The Chief slammed on the brakes and tried to bring it to a stop but it was no use, the plasma landed in front of the Mongoose. The last thing Boss felt before he fell into unconsciousness was the Mongoose lift into the air and the heat from the ball of plasma wash over him.

* * *

>Fred grabbed a clip for the battle rifle, inspected it, and then slid it home with practiced ease. He and the rest of his team were in the armory, quickly loading up on ammo before they were shipped to Earth. Sev and Linda sat together, Linda showing Sev her modified sniper rifle as they already done with getting their ammo. Obi-wan stood off to the side, refusing to use a weapon besides his lightsaber while Fixer and Kelly each grabbed some ammo for their battle rifles and SMGs. The three Elites that had driven them here had left, going to rejoin with their own race. <p>While Fred was grabbing his last frag grenade, Captain Rogers came in on the video monitor next to the door.<p>

"Spartan-104, come in."

Fred quickly attached the grenade onto his belt and went over to the monitor and pressed a button, "Spartan-104 receiving, what's wrong, sir?"

"The Covenant have attacked us far sooner than we thought. You and the rest of your team need to evacuate immediately." Fred felt his stomach drop. From the sound of it, the _Enervate_ wasn't going to make it. "We think that they know you and your team are on this ship, and are desperate to take it out so they can eliminate most of the Spartans and the others from the different universe in one blow. We can't let that happen."

"Is there anything we can do?" asked Fred, though he already knew the answer.

"You know better than I do that you would be helpless in space," Rogers replied, "We need you at Earth more than anything. You are to take a Pelican down to Marine Base Theta and meet up with Commander Keyes to receive further orders. A Marine is coming to meet you now to accompany you to the Docking Bay. Good luck."

"Thank you, sir," he replied, saluting. Then, Rogers face disappeared and the screen went blank. Without hesitating, Fred turned around to face the others.

"You heard?" he asked, and when they nodded he continued, "Then all we can do is quickly finish gearing up and then wait for the Marine to arrive." The atmosphere had changed since the Captain's message. Everyone was set in a grim and determined mood, concentrating on finishing their task or if they were done, inspecting their weapons to have them in the finest condition. After only three minutes, the

door to the armory opened and a private walked into the room.

"Private Sedricks, sir, you received the Captain's message?" he asked.

"Yes I did," Fred replied, skipping introductions, "lead the way." Sedricks quickly left the room with Fred and his team following him. Soon, they arrived at a lift that took them down to the Docking Bay where their Pelican awaited them. To Fred's pleasure, Shark was their pilot again.

"Welcome back!" he cheerfully called back to them as they boarded, "Glad you decided to come back despite the lack of First Class service."

"Sorry Shark, we don't have much time," said Fred as everyone was on board, "We've got to get off of this ship ASAP." Already they could feel the tremors and blasts of the Covenant cruisers as they shot at the Enervate, damaging her hull.

"Everyone's always in a rush," said Shark, slipping down his protective visor on his helmet while preparing the Pelican for take off, "If the Covenant had any heart they would let us take a break every once in a while."

"If the Covenant had any heart," said Kelly, "They wouldn't have started this war in the first place."

"TouchÃ©," Shark replied, flipping a couple of switches as the Pelican lifted off the floor and into the air, "ETA is ten minutes so I'd sit back and relax while you still can." Fred had no intention of doing such a thing at the moment, so he stood behind Shark's chair and held on as the Pelican bucked slightly to the side as it entered space. Looking out through the cockpit window, he could see Earth down below covered with white clouds. He had never set foot on Earth before, and he knew he wouldn't be able to cherish the moment as there was too much to be done.

Ten minutes later they entered Earth's atmosphere. The Enervate had not yet fallen, but Shark informed them that sadly, it was only a small amount of time before it did fall. Fred was still standing behind Shark's seat, watching the ground approach them steadily as they approached the Marine Base. Suddenly, there was a loud thud at the front of the Pelican.

"What the hell?" said Shark, as they were not close enough to the ground to land yet. Without warning, Fred felt an invisible force pull him back as he saw a lightsaber cut through the cockpit and slice through both Shark and his copilot, killing them instantly. Fred looked behind him for the source of the force and saw Obi-wan on his feet, his hand held out in front of him.

"It was General Grievous," said Obi-wan, lowering his hand and activating his lightsaber, "We've got to get off of this ship right now."

Fred nodded and addressed the other, "We're jumping off; both of our pilots are dead." He pushed his grief of losing Shark aside and approached the back of the Pelican, where he saw the ground coming at

them fast, it was now thirty feet below them. Kelly came up at his side, and when he gave her the okay she jumped down to the ground below. Linda jumped down after her, shortly followed by Fixer, Sev, and Obi-wan. Right after Obi-wan jumped, Fred jumped down, freefalling momentarily until he hit the ground, rolling to absorb the impact.

He shook his head to clear his senses and looked up to see the Pelican fly for a short while before crashing on the ground, creating a small explosion that would have surely injured him and his team, if not killed them. Looking around, there was no sign of General Grievous. He must have left after the Pelican had crashed.

"Fred!" He looked over to who yelled and saw Obi-wan, with Sev behind him. "The others are catching up to us, but do you know where we are?"

"Give me a second," said Fred, and he consulted his GPS locator. He saw that they had to head north to reach the base, which was only about a mile away. "We have to head north a mile and we'll reach the base, we'll head out as soon as the others catch up with us." Soon after, Fixer, Linda, and Kelly caught up with them and they headed out at a jog, keeping a lookout in case Grievous decided to come back. In their loose single file line, Fred on point and Obi-wan at the rear, they reached the base within ten minutes. They arrived at the entrance where there were two ODSs on guard.

"Petty Officer Spartan-104," said Fred to one of the soldiers, and after consulting a data pad let them through. As they walked in, Commander Keyes and a sergeant he didn't know came to meet them.

"We saw that your Pelican crashed," explained Keyes, "Is anyone injured?"

"No, everyone's fine, ma'am," Fred replied.

"Good to hear," she said, "Sorry, but you won't have time to rest, you'll have to head out right away. There's been a change in plans."

Fred nodded, "We loaded up on ammo before we came down, we're ready to head out."

"Great," Keyes replied, "You can meet up with the others and they can explain the situation, you will be heading out in ten minutes."

"Is there any news on the _Enervate_?" asked Fred.

Keyes shook her head sadly, "She went down only about a few minutes ago. Most of the crew made it off and are heading here in escape pods, including Captain Rogers." _At least most of them survived_, he thought.

"Go meet up with the others now," said Keyes, changing the subject, "You'll be briefed on the mission shortly."

"I'll lead you to your quarters," said the sergeant, "Sergeant Carter's the name."

"Hey," said Fixer, speaking for the first time, "You're the Sergeant

that came and rescued us the first day we were here."

He laughed, "Seems like everyone is remembering that, Boss said that as well."

"Where is he?" asked Sev.

To Fred's confusion, Carter's face lost its joy and became one of worry, "I'll explain in a bit, lets head over to the others." Carter navigated through the aisles between tents, leading them to their temporary quarters. As they approached, Fred saw everyone was sitting there, but from a quick check noticed the Chief and Boss were gone.

"I've got some work to do," said Carter when they reached the camp, "I'll see you guys later." He walked away, leaving Fred and his team to greet the others. Will immediately got up, dragging his two fingers across his faceplate as a usual sign of greeting, which Fred, Kelly, and Linda promptly returned. Scorch got up to greet Sev and Fixer, hitting them both on the arm while Obi-wan went to sit beside Etain and Jusik. Once they had all greeted each other, they arranged themselves in a rough circle, sitting on ammo crates, boxes, or just the ground.

"So," said Fred, starting off the conversation, "Where are Boss and the Chief?"

"Well, being the typical heroes they are," said Ordo, "They headed into the Ark by themselves to delay Truth from activating it."

"_What?_" said Sev, standing up, "I don't know what the Ark is, but he and the Chief headed into there by _themselves_"

"Was I not speaking clearly?" asked Ordo at a sarcastic tone.

"Okay, wait, let's slow this down," said Obi-wan holding up his hands, "what is the Ark?"

"It's a facility that can control all the Halos at once," Etain answered, "they can all be activated at the same time from there."

"Oh man," said Fixer, his posture showing how shocked he was, "And the two of them went in by themselves?"

"Scorch and I tried to go with them," said Will in a resigned tone, "But they wouldn't listen, said the Mongoose could only fit two."

"Mongoose?" Fred asked.

"ATV that can fit two people," Kal answered, "Brand new, from the looks of it."

"Now that we all know what's going on," said Atin, interrupting the conversation, "I say we go and help them out."

"Commander Keyes said in ten minutes," said Fred, looking at his clock, "seven now. She or someone else will probably brief us on the

mission beforehand."

"Hope she hurries up," said Fi as he stretched out his legs on the ground, "I'm getting cramps sitting here."

"Stretch out," said Ordo, kicking Fi in the leg.

"You know, for some strange reason, you kicking me doesn't help," Fi said, kicking him back.

"Alright, stop it," said Kal, "Let's be patient you two."

"He started it," said Fi. Jusik rolled his eyes and laughed.

"You two do this often?" asked Will, amusement in his voice.

"Pretty much," said Scorch, answering for them, "First time Delta Squad met Ordo, he had Fi pinned on the ground in a headlock. Talk about first impressions." Suddenly, a panic stricken Marine ran into their quarters and for a moment Fred thought he had run to the wrong place, but he saw them and approached their circle. While everyone turned to look at him, he caught his breath.

"What's wrong?" asked Fred.

"He's attacking the base!" said the Marine, who seemed to be afraid almost out of his mind, "He said he followed you and he's attacking!"

"Who?" Fred demanded, but the cold feeling in his stomach already knew who it was.

"General Grievous!"

* * *

>Author's note:** Man, this chapter frustrated me. I had half the chapter written when I decided to scrap it, thinking it was useless and didn't fit with what I was trying to do. So, yeah, that was a pain. But, as always, I hoped you guys enjoyed and please review!

36. This is the Way the World Ends

Author's note: Wellâ€|another long update. I would have had this out earlier but then I got the Halo 3 Beta early and, yeah, you could probably guess where I spent my time. But, I finished it now, so enjoy!

* * *

>This is the Way the World Ends

Boss slowly opened his eyes and instantly felt his head throbbing as if someone was knocking on the inside of his skull. He sat up with difficulty and briefly wondered where he was when it instantly dawned on him, and he realized the Chief was nowhere near him. Boss scrambled to his feet and looked around for him, not seeing him at first. He then saw him lying unconscious on the ground helmet-less;

it must have been thrown off in the crash.

"Chief!" Boss called, running over to kneel beside him. As he did so, the Chief groaned and started sitting up. "Are you alright?" Boss asked.

The Chief shook his head a couple of times before answering, "Yeah, I'm fine, though I hit my head pretty hard." Just then, out of the corner of his eye, Boss saw a bright blue ball of light and turned to see a Wraith mortar hit twenty feet away from them. The two of them shielded their heads as pieces of rock and rubble rained down on them.

"We've got to go," said the Chief, getting up with renewed vigor, "If those Wraiths can reach us, then that means they're close." The Chief placed his helmet back on and turned towards the oncoming mortars - Boss followed suit. He realized that the Chief was right; it looked as if the Covenant tanks were just beyond the next rise. Suddenly, Boss heard the whoosh of a plasma mortar and looking up, saw it was right above them.

"Move!" The Chief yelled, running forward with Boss right behind him. They were able to dodge it, but now Wraith mortars were raining down all around them. One exploded a few feet away from the Chief and though he stumbled a bit, he kept running. Soon, they arrived at the cliff edge and the two of them jumped without hesitating, landing on the ground twelve feet below. Boss saw that they were right at the edge of a battle between brutes and Marines. The Marines were on the losing side as they were greatly outnumbered, but they kept fighting despite the odds against them. Boss was about to rush forward to help them when the Chief grabbed his arm.

"Wait," he said and pointed toward the other side of the battlefield. Boss saw a few Wraiths prowling around the outside, occasionally firing a ball of plasma out onto the field the Chief and Boss had just jumped from. "We need to take those Wraiths out. You go right, and I'll go left."

Boss remembered the Chief didn't have a rocket launcher, "How are you going to take them out?" The Chief's answer was to pull out a frag grenade, tossing it up into the air, and then running into the fight. That doesn't answer anything, Boss thought as he ran to the right, trying to stay on the outer edges of the fight. He didn't want to get involved just yet, not until he had finished taking out those Wraiths, especially since there seemed to be a lot of Brutes around.

As he approached the far side, he saw one of the Wraiths strafing back and forth, occasionally firing shots. Boss held the rocket launcher steady and when it got a lock on the Wraith, he fired. The rocket impacted on right side, blowing a part of the armor off, but it was still operational as it turned towards the origin of the rocket. Boss quickly fired again and watched as the rocket propelled towards the same spot, impacting on the now unprotected side, destroying the cockpit with a bright blue flash of light. As he reloaded he felt a small bit of triumph until another Wraith came to see what had happened to its comrade. Boss hadn't finished reloading so he tried to find cover, but the Wraith had already seen him. The Wraith came for him, and if it fired a shot he'd be finished.

Out of the corner of his eye, Boss saw a flash of green and watched in amazement as the Chief ran forward and jumped onto the Wraith. He pulled back his right hand and formed a fist, driving it into the top hatch, denting it. The Chief then gripped the small opening and using his strength, ripped it open. Boss could hear the Brute pilot cry out in fury and then alarm as the Chief dropped his grenade in it and leaped clear. The Brute tried to pick up the grenade, but it was too late as the grenade went off in his hand, destroying both the Brute and the Wraith.

"Chief, you never cease to impress me," Boss called to him as he was standing up.

"Don't worry, you'll see more," he replied and then pointed to the Wraith coming towards them. Boss turned around and saw it, but now that he had finished reloading, he was able to shoot two rockets at it before it was able to get close enough to them. After he did that, the Chief ran over to him.

"We need to keep moving," he said, pulling out his battle rifle. Boss nodded, strapping the rocket launcher to his back and pulling out his own battle rifle. Together, they ran across the plains towards the Ark. Now they could see where the Covenant were digging, and Boss noticed with a jolt that it was almost uncovered. Chief must have noticed it too since he started running faster. Boss kept pace with him every step, trying to get to the Ark before the Covenant activated it. Looking up towards the sky, he saw that it was completely covered with clouds, which were spinning around a single part of the sky. It looked like a funnel cloud, though Boss knew that the Ark was located below it.

After a few minutes of running, they came to a cliff edge, which was many feet high, at least a hundred.

"Fierfek!" said Boss, looking down the side at how steep it was, "We'll have to rappel down."

"This doesn't look good for us," said the Chief, looking out over the cliff edge. As Boss looked across the dirt plains below them, he realized they weren't as empty as he had thought they were. Out a ways, a structure suddenly began to emerge from the ground, sending a shock wave directly towards their cliff. As it impacted, parts of the cliff fell away, causing the Chief and Boss to step back.

Covenant ships had begun to arrive, including phantoms, banshees, and even a Covenant cruiser, all heading towards the Ark. The Ark itself had opened, splitting at the middle and each similar piece opening up like a flower. Then, from out of nowhere, it emitted a bright flash of light that Boss had to turn away from despite his visor automatically polarizing. As he looked back, he saw that a large structure had rose into the sky, in the shape of dome. There were Covenant converging on the Ark, guarding on ground and air alike.

"This is going to be harder than expected," said the Chief, and out of the corner of Boss's eye he saw the Chief momentarily glance at him.

Under his helmet, Boss grinned, "I've always liked a challenge."

* * *

>As soon as the Marine had said that Grievous was attacking, everyone had grabbed their weapons and headed for the location where Grievous had last been seen. When Fred and the others had arrived there, they saw several dead Marines but Grievous was nowhere to be seen. Fred, with his battle rifle raised to his shoulder, looked around. They were only a small ways from the entrance, which means that Grievous may have headed further into the base.<p><p>

"We should split into groups," said Jusik, "We'll find him faster that way."

"Etain, Bardan, or I should come with each group," said Obi-wan, "His lightsabers will be hard to counter without a Jedi."

Fred nodded, "Blue Team, Jusik, come with me. Omega, you stay together with Etain and Gett and head towards the armory. Delta, Kal, Ordo, and Obi-wan, you head towards Commander Keyes's quarters and make sure she and the others are all right." They all nodded in agreement, and then headed off in different directions. Fred was leading his team towards the middle, as Grievous was most likely going to head there. Many questions had flashed through his mind. Why was he here, attacking them now? Was it to distract them from reaching the Ark, or to try and kill them off for good? Though as soon as the questions appeared in his head, he pushed them to the back of his mind; he couldn't answer them now.

As he made his way towards the middle, he began to hear the distant sounds of gunfire and the sound of lightsabers swinging. Though as he listened, he heard something else that sounded familiar, but couldn't figure out what it was. Over the sound of the gunfire, he heard a distant yell.

"Retreat! Fall back towards the armory!" Fred instantly recognized Commander Keyes. What was she doing out here? He put on a fresh burst of speed, leaped over several ammo crates, and arrived in a small clearing. There were more dead Marines lying on the ground along with some ODSTs. On the outside of the clearing, more Marines and ODSTs were firing at Grievous, who was standing in the middle of it all. To his surprise, he saw the Arbiter standing beside Keyes, protecting her from what was in the clearing. Fred stared in amazement as he figured out what the other noise had been. It was the sound of electrostaffs, used by the MagnaGuards. There were four of them in the clearing right now, standing around Grievous.

"More MagnaGuards?" asked Will in disbelief beside him, "I didn't think he had any more." Fred knew that his team wasn't going to be able to beat Grievous and the MagnaGuards. He turned on his COM link to contact the other two teams.

"Niner, this is Fred."

"Niner here," he replied, "Did you find him?"

"Yes, and he's got four MagnaGuards with him. Come to the middle of the base immediately, and contact Obi-wan's team."

"Copy that, we're on our way," Niner replied, and then shut off the COM link. By now, Grievous had noticed they were in the clearing and

the Marines stopped shooting to watch what was going on. Fred moved forward a little bit, though he wasn't in reach of the MagnaGuard's staffs. The General let his arms fall at his side, though he still kept his lightsabers activated. All of them stood silent for a moment, just looking at each other, when suddenly Grievous began to laugh.

"You don't realize it, do you?" he asked, "You and the rest of your army have no chance of winning this war. The Covenant were always going to win, and now that Darth Vader and I are here to help them, you are helpless."

"You don't have the entire Covenant on your side anymore," Jusik retorted, "They have split up, and allied with us."

Grievous narrowed his eyes at Jusik, and Fred thought for a fearful moment he was going to lunge at the Jedi, but the droid general stayed put. Though now, he was no longer laughing, and Fred realized he hadn't known that the ex-Covenant had become their allies.

"It matters not what allies you make," Grievous replied, raising his lightsabers once more, "You will all die in the end."

Fred's mind raced, they had to delay Grievous for as long as it took for the others to arrive. They wouldn't be able to fight this battle and win, but then an idea came to mind.

"Who's this Darth Vader you're talking about?" asked Fred. He noticed Jusik make a quick sidelong glance at him, and he knew that Jusik had been trying to distract him as well. Grievous turned to look at Fred, looking him up and down and sizing him up.

"You're not the original Spartan," Grievous remarked at last. "None of you are, so where is he?" Fred's heart started beating, his plan was backfiring. Once the others got here, he would notice both John and Boss were missing. He was smart enough to put two and two together, and figure out they were heading to the Ark. Would he leave to chase them down, and if he did, would he be able to head them off?

"You didn't answer my question," said Fred, quickly changing tactics. But Grievous's only response was to separate his arms and pull out another lightsaber, so now he was holding three.

"Don't take me as a fool, I won't be put off," he sneered, and from some unknown signal two of his MagnaGuards lunged at Fred's team. One locked into a fight with Jusik, while the other went to fight the Spartans. The MagnaGuard moved quickly, dodging all of their punches and kicks and retaliating with quick swings with its staff. Fred was knocked back briefly, but before he could join back into the fight, he saw that Grievous was already lunging at him. He stared in dismay; he had no time to raise his battle rifle, let alone his hands, to defend himself.

It was then that he saw a commando leap off of the ammo crates piled high to his right, fly through the air, and kick Grievous in the head, causing him to falter. Looking closer, he saw that it had been Sev, and as he watched, the rest of his team ran into the clearing to provide support.

Obi-wan immediately activated his lightsaber and rushed over to Grievous, who roared in fury and lunged at Obi-wan. Fred saw that Obi-wan could handle Grievous as he parried his blow. Fred turned his attention to the two MagnaGuards, who had leaped into the battle as their General was attacked. The Guards were hit by sniper bullets, but they seemed to be impervious to the bullets as they merely ricocheted off. Fred knew that Linda had found a hidden location.

Fred started to head over to help Sev and Scorch, who were fighting a guard all on their own. But before he could reach them, he saw the MagnaGuard swing its staff hard into Scorch's side, connecting with a loud crack. He gave a cry of pain and tried to move backwards out of the fight, but the guard followed him without mercy, swinging and catching him in the side of his head. Scorch was instantly down, trying to shake the stars out of his head as the guard advanced upon him.

But Sev was there to protect his brother in a heartbeat, grabbing the droid from behind and throwing him away with all his might. The MagnaGuard stumbled a bit, but caught its balance and readied his staff into a fighting position. Fred ran over to stand beside Sev, ready to give him support. The guard didn't hold back at all as it ran forward, swinging its staff at Fred. He ducked underneath the staff as Sev swung his fist over Fred's head, hitting the guard in the face. Fred wasted no time in kicking the MagnaGuard's legs out from underneath it, making it fall onto its back.

But it wasn't done yet as the guard, with lightning fast speed, kicked up back to its feet and hit Fred in the chest with a strong kick, sending him flying several feet back and through the pile of crates that Sev had jumped off of. When he landed, he shook his senses clear and scrambled to his feet, looking for where the MagnaGuard went. He saw that it was still in the clearing, fighting against Sev. Scorch had also rejoined the fight, though he was limping slightly.

"Fred!" He turned towards the shout and saw Etain, Gett, and Omega Squad running towards him.

"There's no time," said Fred, "Grievous and the MagnaGuards are in the clearing." He nodded towards where he had smashed through the crates and to the clearing, where Obi-wan was still fighting Grievous and everyone else fighting the MagnaGuards. None of them hesitated as they rushed around the now broken crates and into the clearing. Etain went to help Sev and Scorch fight the MagnaGuard along with Gett while Atin, Fi, and Darman went to help with the other three. Fred and Niner went around the clearing and towards the back, so now Grievous and his guards were completely surrounded on all sides.

Grievous noticed as well, and came to a decision, "I would say we will meet again, but, unfortunately, that's not going to happen." And with that, he leaped through a gap between Fi and Atin. The commandos moved out of the way and Grievous - with his MagnaGuards - passed through.

"Marines! Follow him and make sure he leaves!" yelled Miranda and the few Marines and ODSTs around her leaped into pursuit of the cyborg. Once they had left, the clearing fell into an eerie silence,

confusion in the air at Grievous's last words.

"Fred, you have to go to the Ark immediately," said Miranda, jogging towards him, "Truth knows what we're doing, he sent Grievous to distract us. Chief and Boss are going to head right into a trap."

"We're ready," Fred replied, nodding in agreement, "But, how are we going to get there? If we head in on Pelicans, we'll be shot down before we can even get close."

To his surprise, Miranda smiled, "I have a way."

* * *

>As the Chief looked out across the plain, he saw thousands of Covenant troops patrolling around the Ark, preventing anyone from getting close. If he and Boss rappelled down the cliff side and tried to get in on foot, they'd be shot dead. The only other option was to fly, though they had now way of doing that as they had no ship. He instantly began searching the sky, looking for any ships they could hijack. His gaze focused on a banshee, flying in circles around the Ark. He raised his battle rifle to get its attention, shooting it in the wing.<p><p>

"Chief, what are you doing?!" Boss asked in surprise.

"When the banshee comes," the Chief said, ignoring his question, "grab it's attention and have it come closer to the cliff edge."

Boss sighed and moved into position, his battle rifle raised. The Chief walked as close as he could to the edge without losing balance and watched as the banshee he had shot made a U-turn and came directly towards him. As it got close Boss began firing at it with his battle rifle, causing it to turn towards him. As the banshee turned, it flew slightly parallel to the cliff edge, completely unaware that the Chief was now running towards it.

At the last second, he launched into the air and landed with a _thud_ on the top of the banshee. He heard the brute inside roar in surprise but it didn't last long as the Chief forced open the canopy and kicked the brute in the face, crushing its skull and causing it to fell out. As it fell, he heard it roar out in pain and fear. The Chief leaped inside before the banshee followed the brute and safely landed it besides Boss.

As the Chief got out, Boss said, "Once again, Chief, you never cease to impress me."

"I'll need to get another one," he replied, "A banshee only fits one."

Boss remained silent for a moment before answering, "I'll ride on the side; I can hang on without falling off. You'll have to drive steady, though."

It was the Chief's turn to be impressed, "Are you sure?"

"Positive."

"Then hang on tight," he replied, climbing back into the banshee and waited for Boss to get himself positioned on the banshee's right wing, trying to make himself look as small as possible. When Boss was ready, the Chief took off from the cliff edge, trying to fly as straight as possible. The Banshee shifted slightly to the right from the weight, but he was able to keep it straight by slightly leaning to the left.

When they arrived close, another Banshee came flying at them. The Chief tensed, his hands hovering over the attack controls, but luckily the Banshee just flew past them on the left. As it flew away, he tilted the Banshee downwards, slowly heading towards the Ark. Directly around the Ark, there were fewer Covenant, only about a hundred, a combination of Brutes and Jackals.

"When we land," said the Chief through their single beam COM link, "head immediately for the door. We won't be able to take on this much Covenant and win on our own."

"Copy that," Boss replied. The Chief looked down one more time before he landed. He saw the huge door at the front, nearly three times as tall as he was and at least ten times as wide. Right now, for some reason, it remained open and the Chief didn't like it. It meant either the Covenant were so full of themselves that they thought no one could get in. Or, they were expecting them, and wanted them to come in.

The ground below them was coming at them rapidly, and at the last moment the Chief leaped out and free fell the last ten feet. As soon as his feet hit the ground, he made a mad sprint to the door. He heard Boss running behind him, and heard the surprised cries and yells of the Brutes and Jackals. By the time they recovered enough to fire, the Chief and Boss were already inside. As soon as they were in, he immediately started looking for a way to close the door, but couldn't find any.

"Fierfek, how do you close this thing!" asked Boss, looking around beside him. As if on cue, the door in front of them slid shut with a loud _thud_, which echoed on the walls around them. After the echo ended, everything became extremely quiet. The Chief looked around at his surroundings more closely and though everything was pitch black, in the middle about a hundred yards away there was a single pillar that was filled with light. He looked closer and saw a figure standing, no, _hovering_, near the pillar and he knew exactly who it was before it started talking.

"So, Demon, you were able to make it this far." He instantly recognized the voice as Truth's. The Chief began to walk towards the pillar with Boss at his side, stepping into the light. "I figured you would have stayed back at that pathetic camp of yours and died with the others."

The Chief's heart started beating quicker, "What do you mean?" But before Truth could answer, the door behind them opened and then shut. The Chief whipped around to see who it was but couldn't see them until he stepped into the light. It was Grievous, and he saw that he was holding 343 Guilty Spark in his hands. Immediately, the Chief raised his battle rifle to his shoulder and aimed at

Grievous.

"Don't waste your weapons on me, Demon, you won't be able to harm me with those," Grievous scoffed and continued walking towards Truth.

"Good work, General," said Truth, "Now we'll be able to know how to activate the Ark." The Chief put the pieces together in his mind; Grievous attacked the camp and had stolen the Monitor, but what happened to the others? Grievous could have killed someone, was that what Truth meant?

"Demon, you are just in time to watch us enter the Great Journey!" called Truth, "Now, Oracle, tell me how to activate the Ark."

343 Guilty Spark had been released from Grievous and was now floating beside him, casually looking back and forth between everyone as they talked.

"Monitor, don't tell them anything!" the Chief yelled, hoping that Guilty Spark had remembered their earlier agreement. Grievous turned to glare at him and activated two of his light sabers but Truth stopped him.

"Don't kill him yet, General, he may still be of use to us," said Truth, then turned to address the Monitor again, "Now, oracle, don't listen to him. How do you activate the Ark?"

"You won't be able to activate it," replied Guilty Spark and Truth glared at him.

"What do you mean?"

"Only a Forerunner can activate the Ark," the Monitor stated, "anyone else who tries will fail. I don't see why you are so angry, there are Forerunner on Earth as we speak."

The Chief stared at Guilty Spark, how was that possible? He had never seen anything that was related to the Forerunner on Earth except for the Ark.

He saw that Truth was as surprised as he was, "That is not possible! You're lying to me!"

"I am merely answering your question," the Monitor replied simply.

Truth took a deep breath before speaking again, "It matters not, I will be able to figure out how to activate the Ark on my own and everyone on Earth will be dead in a moment except for ourselves." Truth turned to smile at the Chief and the realization hit him as if someone had punched him in the chest. The only way to kill everyone on Earth was to glass itâ€¦

"No," whispered the Chief, and turned towards the door, wondering if he had enough time to warn the others.

"There is no time left, Demon," Truth said as he noticed the Chief turn towards the door, "The glassing has begun, and there is nothing you can do about it." Even as he spoke the Chief could feel the

vibrations under his feet as every water source was vaporized, fields were burnt and every living being was killed. All the work on the UNSC, of his Spartans, and of everyone from the separate universe was a waste. He and Boss were the only ground force left. There was nothing left.

An unfamiliar rage worked itself up inside the Chief, and without thinking he ran at Truth, whose smile instantly vanished and turned to fear. Grievous stepped forward to stop him, but the Chief simply jumped off from Grievous's chest, knocking him over and using the momentum to launch himself onto Truth's chair. He punched the Prophet across the face and heard Truth cry out in pain.

"Chief, look out!" Only then did the Chief come back to his senses when he heard Boss's cry and saw a flash of red as a lightsaber activated beside him. Turning towards the noise, he saw Anakin's lightsaber coming at him and felt extreme pain in his leg. The Chief cried out in pain and fell backwards off of Truth, and felt the lightsaber be removed from his leg and saw Anakin standing over him. Truth backed away, holding his face in his hands as blood seeped through a cut.

Anakin wasted no time as he raised his light saber and brought it down on the Chief. But, it never reached him as Boss ran forward and threw his shoulder in Anakin, off-balancing him. The Chief watched in horror as Anakin brought his hand up and Boss rose into the air, unable to control his actions. Then, Boss flew forward onto Anakin's light saber, which impaled him through the shoulder. The two of them didn't move for a moment, then Anakin flicked his hand and Boss flew backwards off the lightsaber and fell onto the ground, where he lay motionless.

Don't let him be dead, the Chief thought in hopelessness, it would be his fault if he died. His blind anger had led Boss to have to rescue him. As Anakin turned towards him, he looked at Boss one last time and suddenly, relief washed over him.

Boss's hand had twitched.

* * *

>Author's note: The end is approaching, two more chapters left at the most, plus an Epilogue that I've already written (Yes, I realize I have an Epilogue without a Prologue, but I don't think it'll kill anyone). Updates will be faster as well since finally after months, I have gotten my laptop fixed, and I won't have to share a computer anymore. As always, please review!

37. Long Way Home

****Author's Note****: The story ends here, so I won't keep you any longer. Enjoy!

* * *

>Long Way Home

The Chief was on his back in front of Anakin, waiting breathlessly for what the Sith would do next. If he decided to attack him, he

would have no way to defend himself. Anakin stood there for a few moments, but without warning Boss kicked out his leg and tripped Anakin. The Chief immediately got to his feet and ran over to help Boss to his feet. They were only able to make it a few feet before Grievous leaped over their heads and landed in front of them.

"You see, Demon, we never meant to let you leave alive," said Truth, hovering forward on his chair. Several dark bruises were beginning to show on the left side of his face, where the Chief had punched him.

"Kill them," said Truth. When neither Grievous nor Anakin would listen to his command, he turned to glare at them, "Why aren't you listening to my command?"

"We don't take orders from you," Grievous snarled.

"We have an alliance, Prophet," Anakin said, still facing the Chief and Boss, "But that does not mean that we are yours to command."

"Fine," replied Truth, not bothering to hold in his anger, "then kill them by your own terms, it matters not to me."

"Sounds good to me," Anakin replied, but instead of making any move towards them, he instead turned around and thrust his lightsaber through Truth's chest. The Chief stared in astonishment as Truth gave one last shuddering breath before his head fell forward onto his chest and his chair fell to the ground. Anakin raised his hand and used the Force on the chair, throwing it away before the fail-safe went off.

"Now," Anakin said, "We continue with what we originally planned." He then walked forward and hit a button. As soon as he did, a rumbling started around the Ark and suddenly the ceiling opened up, showing the funnel cloud above them. More and more questions erupted into the Chief's mind; did he just activate the Ark? If he did, did that mean he was a Forerunner?

"No, I did not activate the Ark," Anakin replied, and the Chief felt like the Sith had read his mind. With a sick feeling, the Chief realized that he might be able to do that. "But I am able to realize how parts of this structure work." And with that, he hit another button and the now free standing walls around them sunk into the ground, so now only the platform they stood on was open to the ground.

When the walls had completely sunk, he heard a loud noise erupt from behind the pillar and when he looked, he saw thousands of Covenant standing there, all of them chanting a war cry. Not only that, he realized with a sinking feeling, but there were also what he guessed to be droids in their midst from the descriptions Boss had given. Phantoms began arriving and hovering above the platform, ready to deploy more troops. How could he and Boss ever get out of this?

Grievous seemed to guess what he was thinking, as he began laughing, "You have escaped again and again, slipping through our grasp. But now, what are you going to do?" He didn't wait for an answer as he lunged straight at the Chief, who raised his hands feebly to defend

himself.

Suddenly, plasma erupted from a turret on one of the Phantoms and landed right in front of Grievous, forcing him backwards. He leapt back with a roar of fury and turned to face the Phantom.

"Who do you think you are?!" Grievous yelled towards it.

"A Spartan." The Chief stared in disbelief, he knew that voice and sure enough a moment later Blue Team headed down the gravity lift and landed on the platform, guns firing at both Grievous and Anakin. They were forced to back away from the Chief and Boss, deflecting the bullets and plasma fire with their lightsabers. Looking at some of the other phantoms, he saw Delta and Omega, the Jedi, Commander Keyes and the Arbiter, everyone that had been stationed at Marine Base Theta was now descending the gravity lifts that had been deployed. More and more Phantoms and even Pelicans arrived at the platform, unloading Marines, Elites, Grunts, and even several Hunters into the fight.

"Attack! Don't let them escape!" yelled Grievous, and the platform suddenly erupted into a battle field, bullets and plasma fire flying across the opening between the two sides as they opened fire unto one another. Fred, Niner, and Obi-wan sprinted forward to help the Chief and Boss, who were trying to make it back to their side.

"Are you all right?" asked Obi-wan, looking over their wounds.

"I'm fit to fight," the Chief answered, "But Boss--"

"I can still fight," Boss cut him off, standing up straighter. At that moment, Anakin came forward through the gunfire and lunged at Obi-wan, who lifted his lightsaber to parry the blow.

"Anakin, what have they done to you?" asked Obi-wan in disbelief, looking over Anakin up and down.

"They have made me more powerful than any Jedi!" Anakin yelled in reply, swinging his lightsaber fiercely, trying to get around Obi-wan's defense. The Chief felt confused about what was happening, but knew right now wasn't the time to ask questions.

"Droidekas!" Boss yelled, looking at something behind the Chief. He turned around to see three droids rolling towards them. Boss, Niner, Fred and the Chief all raised their battle rifles to fire, but before they could, Jusik leaped in front of them and activated his lightsaber.

"We've got this!" Jusik called back to them. The Chief was about to ask who "we" was when suddenly he heard a roar and two Hunters appeared from the fighting. The behemoths raised their massive shields and smashed them into two of the three Droidekas, crushing them so now they were only piles of scrap metal. The last Droideka instantly stopped and unrolled itself so now it was standing on its three legs in a tripod stance, aiming its two guns toward the Hunters. The Chief watched in surprised as an energy shield activated around the Droideka, shielding it from the Hunters blows. The Hunters lowered their own shields to cover their bodies, deflecting the blaster bolts that the Droideka fired.

"Come on, they have this taken care of," said the Chief, and he lead the small group to where most of the fighting was taking place.

"We've got to find Grievous!" Boss yelled. Before the Chief could answer, a Brute sprang at him without warning and punched him in the side of the head, knocking him over. He gritted his teeth in pain as the Brute stepped on his wounded leg and then proceeded to punch him in the visor. Suddenly, he heard the sound of a lightsaber and saw the end of the blue lightsaber plunge through the beast's chest, killing it instantly. The Chief breathed a sigh of relief and pushed the dead Brute off of him. When the corpse was clear, he stared in surprise to see Grievous standing over him.

"You're mine!" he yelled, swinging his lightsaber towards the Chief. He rolled to the side out of the way and used the momentum to roll to his feet, but Grievous was instantly on him, swinging his lightsabers back and forth. The Chief had to use every bit of agility he had to dodge the lightsabers, but it wasn't enough. He stumbled on his wounded leg, slightly off balancing himself for a moment. Grievous didn't waste any time as he thrust his purple lightsaber through the Chief's stomach. He felt extreme pain as the lightsaber burned a hole through his gut and exited through his back before it was pulled out again. The Chief stood facing Grievous for a moment, holding his stomach until Grievous kicked the Spartan onto his back, laughing to himself.

"Get back!" he heard a voice yell and saw both Etain and Jusik jump over him and heard the sound of the lightsabers whirring in front of him as they fought Grievous. It didn't matter now, it was all over for him. His vision was already getting blurry and the pain in his stomach was excruciating.

"Hang on, Chief," he heard a voice say next to him and saw a Commando helmet with a green stripe down the middle. Fixer took something out of his ammo pouch and the Chief saw that it was a syringe. He then had a flash back of when he had first met Delta Squad, and Sev had injected a similar syringe into his broken leg and how it had healed miraculously. He then remembered when Fixer gave Boss a syringe to heal his arm, and had said that he only had one left.

"Fixer, wait, don't use that on me," said the Chief in a weak voice. But Fixer ignored him as he jabbed the needle into his stomach and injected the bacta. The Chief felt the pain fade away as the liquid did its work, and felt his stomach heal and saw that his vision was no longer blurry. The Chief was healed. But, looking over Fixer's shoulder, he saw that Grievous was making his way over to them.

"Fixer, look out!" yelled the Chief as Grievous got closer. Fixer turned around and instantly sprang to his feet, pulling out his battle rifle. But it was no use, using one lightsaber Grievous cleanly cut the rifle in half and using his other, stabbed Fixer through the chest.

"No!" yelled the Chief, and instantly jumped to his feet but knew it was no use. Fixer fell to the ground where he lay motionless. Looking past Grievous's shoulder, he saw that Jusik was lying on the ground without moving, with Etain sitting beside him, trying to heal his wounds. The Chief didn't have the time to prepare himself as Grievous

moved straight past Fixer and attacked him. He dodged the first swing and leaped backwards, ready to dodge again when a small, red beam of light started flickering between them. Grievous stopped in place and looked at the light, as did the Chief. When the light started aiming at the cyborg, he instantly moved out of its way and not a moment too soon. A bright, red laser beam shot past where he had been standing a split-second before. Not knowing where the blast came from, Grievous retreated back into the throng of the fight.

"That's right, you'd better run!" yelled Scorch, and the Chief turned to see him running towards him with a weapon held on his shoulder that he had never seen before. The Chief was about to ask what it was when he remembered Fixer and instantly took off to help him, with Scorch on his heels. When they arrived, Chief and Scorch instantly knelt on either side of Fixer, who still lay where Grievous had left him.

When they were right next to him, Scorch said, "Don't die on me, Fixer. We'll help you out, just hang on." But as the Chief removed Fixer's helmet, he knew there was no hope they could save him, he knew it since Grievous had stabbed the Commando. When his helmet was removed, his face was pale and the life was already draining from his eyes.

"Are you okay?" Fixer asked him, his voice becoming weak.

"Yes," the Chief replied, "thanks to you."

Fixer grimaced in pain, but he turned towards Scorch and continued to talk, "Scorch, watch out for Sev. He's too headstrong for his own good."

"Fixer, stop talking like that," Scorch said fiercely, reaching down and gripping Fixer's hand. "We can help you, we just need Etain and-"

"Scorch, stop it," said Fixer, "there's no point in wasting supplies on me, there's no hope." Scorch didn't reply, remaining silent. The Chief reached forward to rest his hand on Fixer's shoulder.

"We'll win this war," said the Chief, "and we'll always remember what you did."

Fixer managed a weak smile, and turned once more to Scorch, "Tell Boss, I couldn't have served under a better Sergeant, or a with a better squad." And with that, his head fell back and he gave one last breath before he lay completely still, his eyes staring at nothing.

Fixer was dead.

The Chief held his hand on Fixer's armored shoulder for a little while longer until he heard footsteps approaching and turned around to see Etain there, looking at Fixer with a mournful expression.

"I couldn't save Jusik either," she said, her voice thick with grief. He stared at her in disbelief. Jusik was dead too? He felt as if his heart had turned to stone. If this battle didn't end soon, more people that he cared about would die.

With a heavy heart, he replaced Fixer's helmet and stood back up. They wouldn't be able to get his body out, not until the fight was over.

"Scorch, come on," the Chief said, though he still felt sympathy towards him. He knew what it was like to lose a teammate in battle, a teammate that was as close to you as a brother. Scorch didn't move for a little while longer, than dropped Fixer's hand and stood up, hefting the weapon back onto his shoulder.

"When we find Grievous," said Scorch, his voice uncharacteristically cold, "I'm gonna kill him."

* * *

>Boss fought back to back with Niner, each covering the others blind spots. A whole pile of Covenant bodies and scraps of droids lay around them, building up as the fighting got thicker.<p><p>

"Boss, we have to move!" Niner called over his shoulder as he dropped another battle droid. "We need support!" Boss knew he was right, but there weren't any places for them to make their escape. Any hole that appeared in the line of Covenant and droids was instantly closed up again as the forces moved in.

"Boss, look out!" he heard a voice call to his right and turned to see Grievous charging at them through the fighting. Boss quickly dove to the side, grabbing Niner by the shoulder and pulling him down with him. Grievous's lightsabers swung wildly over their heads as they fell towards the ground. Boss quickly rolled back to his feet as Niner did the same, the two of them moving backwards out of Grievous's range. The general was about to charge at them again when he turned back around. Looking around him, Boss saw Captain Rogers and Adams standing with their battle rifles firing.

Grievous shifted his attention to the two Marines and charge at them instead. They moved backwards, firing, but their bullets were easily deflected. No matter what the two Marines did, they couldn't get their bullets to hit him as he lunged first at Rogers. The lightsaber went directly through his chest. But, even though he was in extreme pain, Rogers pulled a combat knife he had on his belt and thrust it forward, hitting the General in the stomach. Grievous roared in pain and pulled his lightsaber out of Rogers' chest, leaping back into the fighting before Boss or Niner could do anything.

Adams rushed over to kneel beside Rogers while the two Commandos stood beside them, giving them cover.

"Adams," Boss heard Rogers say. He coughed, then continued, "I want you to help these people who came from the separate universe. Once this battle is over and we have won, they will need our help."

"Sir, wait!" shouted Adams, but it was too late. Roger's eyes had closed and his head sank to the floor. Boss felt grief for the Captain, and wished that he had had more time to serve with him. The mourning didn't last long as a small squad of Jackals was advancing towards them, their energy shields lowered to protect their bodies. Boss and Niner instantly opened fire while Adams grabbed his battle rifle and joined them. Unexpectedly, Adams strapped his battle rifle to his back, grabbed his shotgun, and charged at the jackals,

screaming the entire time. The Jackals, who weren't expecting his, immediately seized fire and started scrambling backwards to get out of the way.

Adams didn't hesitate as he kicked one of the Jackal's shield out of the way and unloaded a blast into one Jackal, splattering purple blood onto the floor. Without missing a beat he drove the butt of the shotgun into another Jackal's skull, breaking it. The other two Jackals recovered themselves enough to turn around and fire, but that left their flanks exposed to Boss and Niner, who dispatched of them quickly. Boss quickly ran over to Adams, who was standing there taking deep breaths as he looked at the dead Jackals with a blank look in his eyes.

"Careful, Adams," Boss said as he stood beside Adams. "Using your anger like that can get you killed." Adams' only answer was to nod vaguely, reload his shotgun, and then run back into the fight. Boss was about to follow him, to make sure he didn't do anymore stupid things, when he felt a tap on the shoulder. Turning, he saw Niner standing there.

"Don't worry about him, that Marine knows what he's doing," Niner said.

Boss sighed, "I hope you're right."

* * *

>The Chief ran through the battle with Scorch right on his heels, looking for Grievous. Once they killed the cyborg, they would have the advantage of winning this fight as the Covenant would only have one leader to command them. He didn't see Grievous anywhere, and knew that the Cyborg had made his way deeper into the fighting. Running forward, he saw Blue Team as they quickly brought down several battle droids and Jackals who had been unfortunate enough to challenge the Spartans. Fred and the others jogged forward to meet him. After such a long period of time, Blue Team was whole again.<p><p>

"What happened?" asked Fred, his voice thick with concern as he saw the Chief's new wound in his stomach.

"Grievous," the Chief replied, and then dragged his two forefingers across his faceplate in the usual Spartan greeting. The other Spartans returned the gesture.

"Where is he now?" asked Will, holding his battle rifle casually against his stomach.

"I don't know, we were looking for him."

"I see you've used the spartan laser," said Kelly, looking at the weapon Scorch still had on his shoulder.

"Spartan laser?" the Chief asked, looking at the weapon again, "They get that from us?"

Linda shrugged, "I guess so."

"Are you alright? That wound looks nasty," Fred said.

"I'm fine," he replied, "Fixer was able to heal my stomach." He felt a pang of grief as he mentioned the Commando.

"Where is he?" asked Fred.

"He's dead," Scorch replied, his voice flat. The Chief saw the Spartans become rigid with shock at the news.

"Is that why you're looking for Grievous?" asked Will quietly, the Chief knew they could read him like a book. He nodded in reply, but was interrupted as an explosion erupted next to them and they turned to see several Brutes, Jackals, and Battle Droids running towards them. The Chief instantly fell in line with Blue Team and Scorch, the Spartans firing their battle rifles while Scorch charged his weapon. Within five seconds he shot a bright red laser directly into the incoming hostiles, killing many Jackals and Battle Droids along with a Brute.

"Grenades!" shouted the Chief, and all six of them threw frag grenades right in front of the line, blowing up half of them. There were still several brutes and a few Jackals and Battle Droids as they reached them. One Brute threw itself at the Chief as it went berserk, but he nimbly dodged to the side. As the Brute rushed past him, he drove the butt of his battle rifle into the back of its head. The Brute, slightly dazed from the attack, turned to face the Chief only to receive several bullets to the face, completely ripping it apart. It fell dead as the Chief turned to shoot one charging Battle Droid in the leg and another in the head. Just when they finished off the last Jackals, more Covenant and droids charged towards them. He was about to start firing when he heard a feeble voice over his COM link.

"Chiefâ€|help." He instantly recognized it as Scorch and whipped around to see Grievous holding him against the pillar in the center, choking him. The Chief was about to take off to help him when someone called his name behind him and he turned to see Fred on the ground, wounded, with Will standing beside him.

"What happened?" the Chief asked.

"He was hit by sniper fire," Will replied, covering his fallen comrade as he shot at the advancing line.

"Linda!" the Chief yelled, and she paused in her firing and turned towards him. "Take out that sniper!" She instantly took out her sniper rifle and brought it to her shoulder, aiming towards the opposite end.

"Help him!" he ordered Will, "I've got to help Scorch!" He then turned and sprinted towards Grievous, his heart beating quickly in his chest. Grievous was already raising his lightsaber above his head and about to deal the death blow, he wasn't going to make itâ€|

â€|But Ordo was able to reach Grievous before the Chief, grabbing his arm that was raised above his head. Grievous roared in fury and threw Ordo off, but the Chief was there to jump into the air and dropkick Grievous in the back, sending him flying forward and off of Scorch. Scorch fell to the ground where he lay, catching his breath.

The Chief ran over to him, "Are you alright?"

"Yeah," Scorch replied, breathless, "I just need to catch my breath." The Chief nodded, then got up to stand beside Ordo, facing Grievous. The cyborg climbed to his feet and stared at the two soldiers, absolutely livid. Without saying a word, he lunged at the two of them, who dodged out of the way. Grievous went after Ordo first, cutting him across the chest and causing him to stumble backwards and then turned towards the Chief. He dodged the first two swings but the third connected with his face, cutting diagonally across. The Chief cried out in pain, but luckily the wound was shallow. He no longer could see out of his visor so he ripped off his helmet and threw it to the side.

Grievous stared at him for a moment before speaking, "So you really are human? I had begun to think you were a cyborg, like me."

"I'm nothing like you," the Chief replied, raising his battle rifle. But suddenly, behind Grievous he saw a red light beginning to form and he instantly knew what it was. The Chief dropped to the ground on his stomach, causing Grievous to look at him in confusion before turning around. The Cyborg had no time to move as Scorch finished charging the spartan laser, letting out a beam that exploded on Grievous's chest and stomach, blasting right through him. The Chief rolled out of the way as Grievous fell backwards, almost right on top of him. When Grievous fell, the Chief stared at his corpse for a short while.

He could barely believe the fact that Grievous was dead. He heard footsteps approaching and turned to see Ordo offering a hand, which he took. As the Chief got to his feet he saw that the wound on Ordo's chest was luckily shallow, not deep enough to cause serious harm. He looked over at Scorch, who was holding the spartan laser on his shoulder.

"I told you I'd kill him," said Scorch. But then, a black shape emerged from behind Scorch, and he realized it was Anakin.

Both the Chief and Ordo started forward and yelled, "Duck!" Scorch dropped down instantly, and Anakin missed his swing, which would have decapitated Scorch had he not moved. Obi-wan then came to help, forcing Anakin backwards and away from Scorch. They fought with each other for a short while, each parrying the others blows, when Anakin stepped backward.

"This fight is over, but we will meet again," the Chief heard Anakin say and with that, he leaped away from Obi-wan and disappeared among the fighting.

Obi-wan stood there for a moment, then said, "He's leaving." As if on cue, the droids in the battle stopped fighting, pulling their guns against their chests and deactivating. The Covenant were now confused, with no leadership to guide them they didn't know what to do. The Marines and ex-Covenant wasted no time as they charged forward, taking advantage of the Covenant's confusion. A victorious cry started as the Covenant began retreating, running away from the battle and back out into the field with their enemies in hot pursuit.

The war was over, and humanity had survived.

But at what cost?

Now that the battle was over, the Chief could see past the edges of the Ark and saw how barren the landscape was after the glassing, and everything that had happened in the past few days came crashing on his shoulders. He was so intent on looking at the burnt plains that he didn't notice the Brute coming up on him from behind.

"Chief, look out!" yelled Scorch, and the Chief turned around to see a Brute Chieftain holding a hammer above his head. He had no time to dodge as the hammer connected with his head, and without the protection of his helmet, he fell backwards and lost consciousness.

* * *

>The Chief blinked open his eyes and a bright blue light made him instantly close them again. Making another attempt to open his eyes, he squinted in the bright light until he could open them fully and he took in his surroundings. He was in a medical wing, but where he couldn't tell. The light had been the ceiling light above his head, and turning his head around he saw in surprise that Cortana was standing on the pedestal.<p><p>

"Cortana!" the Chief said in surprise, sitting up. But his head began throbbing and he laid back down again, holding his head. "How did you make it back?"

"Since you made an alliance with the Elites, the commander agreed to send a squad after me as the rest of you were too busy protecting the World," she replied, smiling. The joy he felt at seeing Cortana again instantly vanished as he remembered why he was in the medical wing. He threw back his sheets and ignoring the pain in his head, stomach, and leg, he got up and walked out of the room in his black fatigues.

"You should be resting for at least another day," Cortana spoke through the speakers.

"Where is everyone else?" the Chief asked, ignoring her comment.

He could hear her give a sigh of resignation and say, "Head straight and then head down the hallway to the left. They'll be in the end room." He followed her directions and when he opened the door, everyone stared at him in surprise.

"Chief!" said Boss, who had his helmet off, "we thought you'd be unconscious for another day!" The Chief noticed that only Delta Squad, Kal, and Ordo were here.

"Where is everyone?" he asked.

"Well, you already know about Fixer and Jusik," said Boss, and the Chief noticed the raw grief in his eyes, "Fred is still unconscious. He went into surgery as soon as we boarded Cairo Station, and they were able to save him." The Chief breathed a sigh of relief. He had just been reunited with Blue Team, he didn't want to lose any of them again so soon.

"And everyone else is either tending to their wounds or resting," Boss continued.

"As should you be," said Cortana, appearing on the pedestal next to him and giving him a hard stare.

"I'm fine," said the Chief, ignoring the throbbing in his head that told him otherwise.

"Chief, I saw the hit you took," said Scorch, and the Chief was thankful that his voice had regained back it's normality, "Iâ€¦I honestly thought that Brute had killed you for a moment."

Ordo nodded in agreement, "That beast had busted open your skull."

"Did you kill him?" asked the Chief.

"Oh yeah," Ordo replied in a satisfied tone, "Obi-wan showed the Brute up, he completely decapitated it." The Chief nodded, that Chieftain had been the last bit of leadership the Covenant had. Now, they just had to finish wiping them out.

"Chief, we've got to tell you something," Kal said, scratching the back of his head. "I'm glad we were able to help you out with your war, but our own war is starting back home." The Chief nodded in understanding; they had to go back. They couldn't stay here, though the Chief had privately wished that they would have been able to.

"I understand, you won't be able to stay here," said the Chief. He paused, than gave a sad smile, "But that doesn't mean I won't miss you."

* * *

>Two days had passed since the end of the UNSC-Covenant war. Boss now stood with everyone in the Prophet's chamber in the base on Jecovah, saying goodbye. Everyone's wounds had healed, and now it was time for them to go their separate ways. He watched as the Chief, wearing his black fatigues, shook hands with Kal Skirata. When Kal walked away from the Chief to talk to Sergeant Johnson, Boss walked forward to say his goodbyes.<p><p>

"You feeling alright?" Boss asked as he noticed the Chief was still limping.

"You worry too much," said the Chief, hitting his hand on Boss's uninjured arm. "What do you plan on doing when you get back?"

"I don't know yet," Boss replied, looking over at Obi-wan, "Obi-wan will probably give us instructions. We have nowhere else to go except into hiding, and he knows Darth Vader the best." After the battle, Obi-wan had explained to them that Anakin was really Darth Vader, his name having been changed after he turned Sith.

"We owe you so much," said the Chief, "you know where to come when you need help." Boss nodded and was about to reply when Obi-wan interrupted him, "Time to go." Everyone grouped back together, one group being the people who were staying and the other the people who were heading back to their own universe. It was hard to be leaving

now, after growing close to the Chief and everyone else here. It was as if they had trained together, and the grief became fresh again as he remembered the two people who weren't going to make it home.

"If any of you need help whooping ass, you know my number," Johnson said, grinning.

"Wait." Everyone turned towards the voice and saw that it was Adams. He walked over to stand beside Boss and said, "I'm going with you."

"What!" said Johnson, surprised. Boss stared at him with equal surprise.

"Adams, you've got your life here--"

"No," Adams said, cutting him off, "remember what Captain Rogers said to me before he died? He told me to help you, and I believe that I can help by coming with you." He looked at Boss with a grim look in his eye, "I know what you're up against."

"Are you sure?" Boss asked, "Our universe is going to be a lot different."

Adams shrugged, "I'll get used to it. It can't be that much different."

"It's your choice, son," said Johnson, "But it's gonna be hard losing your skills here."

Adams smiled at him, then turned to Boss, "Ready when you are." Boss nodded and turned to Obi-wan, waiting for instruction.

"Hopefully, we will see each other again," said Obi-wan as he bowed down, Etain copying his gesture.

"Spartans! Attention!" the Chief barked, and all five Spartans snapped to attention, saluting. All the clones from the separate universe snapped to attention as well. As one, they all dropped their hands, and without hesitating Obi-wan turned around and stepped through the portal. Everyone followed him, stepping through one at a time until it was only Boss and Adams left. Adams went through first, but Boss paused before stepping in, looking back one last time.

"We'll be back," said Boss and with that, he stepped into the portal.

* * *

>Author's Note: It is DONE! Two years in the making and I have finally finished. There will still be two more chapters, but they will only be one or two pages long, kind of a follow-up thing. They will be posted soon since they are already finished. I really hope you've enjoyed this story as much as I have had writing it, and I can't thank you enough for reading.

****Author's Note:**** This isn't a true chapter, it's only about a page and a half long on Microsoft Word and is just a follow up chapter. After this, it's the Epilogue that will open up for the sequel, and then it is completely finished.

* * *

>A New Beginning

Two weeks had passed since the war had ended and things were starting to become as normal as they would ever be. Now that Earth was glassed, it was uninhabitable in all places save for the small patch of land around the Ark. Any surviving people had moved to Jecovah; one thousand out of the billions that used to live on Earth. The Marines were busy situating everyone and guarding them incase any Covenant that had been left alive decided to attack.

Blue Team along with Half-Jaw, the Arbiter, and a group of Spec Ops elites were busy searching the universe for any Covenant stragglers. If any leadership was regained, the Covenant could become a threat to humanity again. As the Chief ordered Kelly to arm a charge on a locked door where there had been signs a small group of Covenant were hiding here, he thought back to what everyone from the separate universe might be doingâ€|

* * *

>Boss and Adams, their armor taken off for fear of recognition, followed Senator Bail Organa out onto the balcony as he showed his wife their new child, Princess Leia Organa, who was Darth Vader's daughter. The baby would be in danger from the powerful Sith Lord, which was why the two of them were to be Leia's bodyguards, watching over her as she grew up. Bail knew who they truly were, as Obi-wan had told him. But now that Darth Vader would be searching for the Jedi as well as the Clones, they would need to be undercover. Though he had Adams with him, he already missed his brothers and thought about what their original plan was.<p><p>

Boss knew Scorch and Fi would have said their goodbyes to Sev and Atin outside of the Lars' homestead. Luke Skywalker, Vader's other child, would be under the protection of Scorch and Fi as well as the Lars family. The two commandos would act as farmers, Luke being oblivious to the fact that they had fought in the Clone Wars as well as the UNSC-Covenant war. Obi-wan would be there to explain the situation and to hand Luke off to Owen Lars, who was Vader's stepbrother. Him and his wife would raise Luke as their nephew, the boy not knowing who his father truly was. After that meeting, Sev and Atin would go with Obi-wan to hide out with him in a homestead close enough to watch over Luke.

Darman and Etain had never left the planet Kashyyyk. They would remain there in a makeshift house along with Commander Gett, watching over the portal in case the Empire tried to return to that universe. Also, the two of them could finally find the peace that they much deserved.

Niner would be the only one to return to military service, helping the small, newly formed Rebel Alliance with a special mission. They had gotten word of a new weapon the Empire was building, but needed further information for what it was for. Once they did, they would

most likely destroy it, but would need the plans and layouts in order to do that. That was where Niner would come in, helping retrieve the plans along with the help of a young man named Kyle Katarn.

Kal Skirata and Ordo, along with Ordo's fellow ARC Trooper and brother Mereel, had their own plans of which no one else knew much about. But it involved a certain Kaminoan named Ko Sai and an attempt to help the Clones from aging so fast and to give them a longer life to live. Boss hoped they were successful, he wanted to live his life to the fullest.

As he watched Bail and his wife play with their daughter, he knew they had some years of peace left before they were thrust back into war. But when that time came, he knew that he would be ready.

39. Epilogue

****Epilogue****

The Chief had returned to Jecovah a few days earlier and he now sat on an ammo crate outside of the Covenant base on Jecovah, able to rest for the first time in a long time. His helmet sat beside him and the cool breeze felt good against his face. He knew the Marines that were working on converting the former Covenant base to a UNSC base were giving him surprised looks; very few people have actually seen his face, but he didn't care.

Now that he could rest, he had time to brood on the things that had happened in the past year. Reach had fallen, the Pillar of Autumn had found the first Halo and he had his first fight against the Flood, Blue Team's mission of destroying the Unyielding Hierophant, and his return to Earth. From there, how he had attacked the Covenant base on Jecovah with Johnson and was captured, and then sent back in time where he found Delta Squad.

He felt a pang in his stomach and knew that he missed everyone from the separate universe. They had become close in their fight against the Covenant and the small faction of the Empire. Without them, they would have lost this war. As he was thinking, he hadn't noticed Johnson walking towards him.

"Dr. Halsey wants to see you in the control room," he said.

The Chief looked up at him, "What for?"

Johnson shrugged, "I have no idea, she didn't tell me, as always." The Chief sighed; so much for his time to relax.

"Thanks, Johnson." Johnson nodded and walked away. The Chief grabbed his helmet and put it back on and watched his HUD as all the controls and statistics came to life before heading into the base. As he walked down the hallway, he saw Marines repairing the damage that had been done over a month ago, most of it already fixed. He found the control room and sure enough, he saw Halsey tapping on her datapad as information from the base transferred into it.

"You wanted to see me, ma'am?" The Chief asked at the doorway, pausing.

"Yes, John, I wanted to ask you something," she replied without looking up. The Chief walked in to stand beside her, towering over her.

After a few moments of silence, the Chief prompted, "What is it?" Halsey started as if he had scared her.

"Sorry, just so much new information," she replied, and then looked up at him, "The Covenant told you they built the time portal, didn't they?"

"Yes," he replied, a little confused at her question. If that was it, why couldn't she have asked him over his COM link?

"I think they lied to you," she said, and when the Chief didn't reply, she replied, "Just give me a couple more minutes, I need to check something." The Chief stood patiently at her side as she tapped furiously on her datapad, every once in a while muttering under her breath.

When her eyes went wide with disbelief and she stopped typing, he asked her, "Did you find something?"

"John, this isâ€|this is absolutely amazing," she said, and then looked back up at him, "The symbols and the language, it all adds up. Johnâ€|the Covenant didn't build that portal, the Forerunners did."

40. Author's Note

****Author's Note****

I'm really sorry about the lack of updating. As most of you have noticed, I did post the prologue to the sequel titled Star Wars: Combat Evolved. I was about to edit Ch. 1 and post it when September 25th arrived. Sooo, yeah, I pretty much spent all of my free time (whatever time I had between school and swimming practice and meets) playing Halo 3.

Then what happened that is bad for me but lucky for you guys is I got the red ring of death on my 360. So, while that's getting replaced (I'm still waiting for the damn box to come) I'll be working on revising this story. I would work on the sequel, but I want to wait until Republic Commando: True Colors comes out and I've read it before I continue the sequel (book comes out on October 30th).

So, once again I'm really sorry for not updating, but in November once swimming ends and I've read the new RC book, expect new chapters for the sequel. For now, check back every once in a while to see which chapters in Halo: RC I've revised. So far, I've finished Ch. 1 and 2. Well, that's all I got for now.

See ya in November!

End
file.